

# Kids voted in Cagayan de Oro, says Pimentel

STORY  
ON PAGE A2

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# PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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## Tancangco admits she's weird

By G. LACUARTA  
COMMISSIONER  
Luzviminda  
Tancangco yesterday admitted that she was indeed weird "if it meant going against the tide and fighting TANGANGCO/A12

WEIRD NA KUNG WEIRD, PERO AKO ANG MAY TAMA!



# Abus moving deep into Basilan jungle

Sabaya says US hostage wounded, 3 soldiers beheaded

By JULIE ALIPALA-INOT,  
ALEXANDER YOUNG  
AND ALLAN A. NAWAL  
PDI Mindanao Bureau

LAMITAN, Basilan—Military operations against the Abu Sayyaf were temporarily stopped yesterday, but the bandits and their hostages are reportedly making their way to the thickly forested Mt. Mahadji in Maluso town.

Insp. Omar Adjad Dalawis, Lamitan police chief, said that at 3 p.m. Tuesday, the group was sighted moving toward Barangay Baas on the way to Mahadji.

Dalawis said there was no better place than Mahadji for the bandits to keep their hostages. "For one, the cell site there is open. They will be able to communicate clearly, and the terrain is difficult," he said.

But Col. Juvenal Narcise, outgoing commander of the 103rd Brigade, said that there were three major detachments in Mahadji and that it would be impossible for the bandits to enter the area.

The lull in the military operations in Basilan was apparently to give way to the turnover of the 103rd Brigade command from Narcise to Col. Hermogenes Esperon. (See story below.)

"Our soldiers are still there. But there are no clashes," said Col. Horacio Lapinid, spokesperson of the Southern Command media bureau.

Lapinid said the last encounter between government troops and the Abu Sayyaf was on Tuesday in Barangay Sinangkapan in Tuburan town.

In an interview yesterday with Radio Mindanao Network, Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Abu Sabaya ABUS/A12

## New ground commander a Mindanao veteran

By CARLITO PABLO

THE NEW ground commander of military troops in Basilan is a risk-taker, a peace advocate, and a Mindanao veteran.

Col. Hermogenes Esperon, who yesterday took over the command of the 103rd Brigade in place of Col. Juvenal Narcise, brings to the post a wealth of experience whether in combat, intelligence, or staff work.

And according to Col. Horacio Lapinid, spokesperson of the Southern Command media bureau, Esperon also has a better knowledge of the terrain in Basilan, where military troops are engaged in sporadic clashes with the Abu Sayyaf bandits.

Lapinid said the decision of the top brass to replace Narcise with Esperon was "based on an assessment of leadership."

Esperon himself was not inclined to talk about his new assignment.

In a phone interview with the INQUIRER in Davao City, all he would say was that his new designation

NEW/A7



FALLEN HERO. President Macapagal, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, pays her respects to 2nd Lt. Gene Kenneth Bulong who was killed in action fighting the Abu Sayyaf in Lamitan, Basilan. Below, at left, a grieving Catherine Johanna Albrecht, 20, holds up yearbook photo of her boyfriend Gene Kenneth who was a member of PMA Class 2000. JOAN BONDOL

## 'I'm a soldier, I must comply first before I complain...'

By BLANCHE S. RIVERA

"I'M A SOLDIER and must be flexible in any situation."

This was how 2nd Lt. Gene Kenneth G. Bulong, 22, received the news that he was going to be transferred from Jolo to Basilan late last year.

"I had no option but to follow... I just said to myself that as a soldier, I must comply first before I complain."

These were Bulong's own words, typewritten on two bond papers that are believed to be part of a personal journal that he had been keeping. The papers, which were returned to his parents along with his other stuff, were a testimony to the valiant soldier's commitment to his profession.

Bulong was killed in action last Saturday during a firefight with Abu Sayyaf bandits who were holed up at a hospital in Lamitan, Basilan, with more than a dozen hostages. A rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) pierced the V-150 armored fighting vehicle that he commanded.

He was executive officer of the 11th Light Armor Company, "one of the best" in the battalion, according to the proud soldier's journal.

Bulong is a member of the Philippine Military Academy's "Sanghaya" Class of 2000.

Among the sheets of paper found in Bulong's wallet was a list of the "pasalubong" (gifts) he had intended to buy for his family and friends. He was supposed to bring a "malong" (skirt) for his sisters and cousins, crabs and lobsters

I'M/A13



EDWIN BACASMAS

## Palace: Martial law 'not necessary' for now

By JULIET L. JAVELLANA,  
ANDREA TRINIDAD-ECHEVEZ  
AND ARMAND N. NOCUM

AMID continuing opposition to a proposal to declare martial law or a state of emergency in Basilan, Malacañang said that it did "not seem necessary" to resort to either option for now, but refused to rule out such measures.

"Martial law or a state of emergency are options. The President will use that option as soon as she feels it is necessary. Right now it doesn't seem necessary," presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said at a press briefing.

"What I would like to emphasize is the President is fully aware of these options (and) the legal implications. She's been briefed on the military implications, and she will make the decision the very minute it looks necessary," Tiglao said.

PALACE/A12



A SOLDIER armed with a light machinegun patrols a jungle area in Lamitan, Basilan. At right, a Yakan woman sits quietly as she waits for her turn at the queue for relief goods also in Lamitan. DENNIS SABANGAN



DENNIS SABANGAN

## Malacañang seeks help of Vatican

By JULIET L. JAVELLANA

MALACAÑANG is enlisting the support of the Vatican's troubleshooter to help put an end to the Abu Sayyaf hostage crisis.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has asked Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, the Holy See's secretary for relations with states, to pray for the immediate resolution of the crisis.

Ms Macapagal told the archbishop, dubbed the Vatican's troubleshooter, in Malacañang on Wednesday that the Philippines needed prayers more than anything else in resolving the hostage crisis.

Tauran assured Ms Macapagal that the Vatican would continue to

MALACAÑANG/A13





# Kids voted, says Pimentel

BY CHRISTINE AVENDAÑO

**WHILE it is a given that in Philippine elections even the dead vote, yesterday's revelation that children made up to look like adults were able to vote, not just once but several times, in last May's polls came as a shock to many.**

A 15-year-old Marawi City girl admitted yesterday that she voted three times in Cagayan de Oro City in exchange for P1,500.

She said children aged 11 to 17 years old were made to dress up as adults, with makeup, high heels and all, so they could vote, at least in Cagayan de Oro City.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. presented the girl, her face covered with a veil to hide her identity, at a news conference at the Senate yesterday.

Pimentel said the girl's testimony was "startling evidence" of an electoral anomaly that was perpetrated in the May 14 polls.

The fraud might have cost Pimentel's son, Aquilino Pimentel III, the mayoralty of Cagayan de Oro City.

The elder Pimentel said, however, that it was not only in Cagayan de Oro that the fraud was committed but in more than 16 areas of the country as reported to him by people who had complained of election anomalies.

Pimentel said he was in the process of gathering evidence of the fraud.

Speaking in Cebuano-Visayan, the girl said she used the name Nats Taringtingan Dimaporo to vote in Bara Opol town in Misamis Oriental and in Barangay Bulwa in Cagayan de Oro.

She said a friend, a certain Nadya Maruom, recruited her for the job and they put on long-sleeved dresses, baggy pants, high heels and makeup so they could pass for adults.

She said she was paid P500 each time she cast her ballot. She said she was made to vote for the younger Pimentel's rival, Mayor Vicente Emano, and the candidates of the local opposition party, Padayong Pilipino.

The girl claimed more than 200 children participated in the fraud.

She said they rubbed baby oil on their fingers to remove the indelible ink that election officials used to mark all voters.

She said the leader of the operation was from Marawi as were all the children.

She said they were actually substituting for Marawi City voters who had decided to vote in nearby Cagayan de Oro because the "pay" there was much higher.

Pimentel said three other children "have indicated their willingness to come forward and buttress her statements."

He said the board of election inspectors in the areas mentioned should be prosecuted for allowing children to vote.

He said he would push for a Senate investigation into the matter.



**SHAKING AND RATTLING**

Volcanic debris flows down the slopes of Mayon Tuesday following the partial collapse of its dome recently. Authorities warned at least 67,000 persons living in the shadow of the volcano to prepare for evacuation as tremors linked to lava movement rattled the mountainside.

## Palace studying calls to oust DAR chief

BY JULIET L. JAVELLANA

MALACANANG is evaluating ouster calls against Agrarian Secretary Hernani Braganza but is convinced that so far, his performance is "not weak."

Presidential Spokesperson Rigo-berio Tiglao made the statement in response to demand made by the Task Force Mapalad-Negros Occidental for Braganza's replacement.

The task force representing nearly 5,000 farmers in the province ended a 40-day protest in front of the DAR

main office in Quezon City but has vowed to return to seek Braganza's head.

The farmers' group has described Braganza's performance as DAR chief to be "below par."

"There's no such snowballing demand," Tiglao said. "There are farmers who have complaints, these are all being evaluated and studied. But as far as we know there is no big demand or groundswell of demand against Secretary Braganza."

Tiglao noted that the farmers' de-

mands were merely aired in the media and even put out through a newspaper and that the Palace does not "just react quickly" to such calls.

He said "both sides are being heard for a rational decision."

"The performance of each Cabinet (member is) continuously evaluated. Right now, there's no major indication that his performance is in any way weak," Tiglao said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday convened the Presidential Agrarian Reform Council (PARC) to

assess the status of the country's agrarian reform program.

"The President wanted to emphasize that one of the main thrusts under her administration is to accelerate the agrarian reform program and she has set a target of one hundred thousand (hectares) to be distributed a year," Tiglao said.

He said that while agrarian reform is an ongoing program, the President wants to speed up its completion and to make sure that the targets are met every year.

## Senate OKs P11-B extra budget

BY ARMAND NOCUM

THE SENATE yesterday ratified the bill appropriating a supplemental budget of P10.9 billion to fund, among other things, the five percent increase in the salary of government employees.

The Senate adopted without amendments the House bill approved earlier. That means the increase will take effect starting July 1 and not retroactive to Jan. 1 as earlier proposed.

Yesterday, Sen. John Osmeña, chair of the finance committee, said the senators had to approve the House version of the bill in order to ensure that it is passed before the 11th Congress adjourns today.

"We will pass the bill as it was recommended by the House, the Senate will have no amendments to the House bill and there will be no need for a bicameral (committee meeting to review the amendments)," he said before the bill was approved.

The Senate approval of the bill paves the way for the President to sign it into law today.

Osmeña said he had to drop his proposal for a retroactive increase after Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin told him that the government

was short of P3.8 billion to cover this.

"There's no money, I cannot do anything about it," he said.

The bill will provide government workers 5 to 12 percent salary increase.

Of the P10.9 billion supplemental budget, P3.8 billion would go to salary adjustment fund; P4.15 billion for miscellaneous personnel benefits fund; P1.45 billion for the Philippine National Police; P500 million for the Department of National Defense; and P1 billion for Foreign Assisted Projects.

A big chunk of the bill has been earmarked for the 5-percent increase in salaries of government workers, and 12.5 percent increase in salaries of the members of the Armed Forces and Philippine National Police.

The supplemental budget became necessary to ensure the government workers' salary increases because the government is now operating on last year's budget.

Last year's general appropriations act failed to pass because Congress was preoccupied with the impeachment trial of former President Joseph Estrada. In such a case, the government will have to operate on the previous year's appropriation.

## Washington accepts new RP ambassador

THE UNITED States has accepted the nomination of banking and insurance executive Albert del Rosario as the next Philippine ambassador to Washington.

In a note sent to the Department of Foreign Affairs, the US State Department welcomed the nomination of Del Rosario to replace Ambassador Ernesto Maceda.

Del Rosario's appointment, however, has met with stiff opposition from career foreign affairs officials who felt they were being bypassed.

The DFA officials, who requested anonymity, also opposed the nominations of former Justice Secretary Artemio Tuquero as ambassador to Canada and former Transportation and Communications Undersecretary Josefina Lichauco as permanent representative to the United Nations.

"The President should be held to her statement that competence would be the only criteria (in her appointments)," the officials said.

The officials said Del Rosario, with his business background, is "not a known entity in the field of international diplomacy."

"His credentials may not be exten-

sive enough for him to competently face the challenges of the much-coveted US diplomatic post," the officials said.

Del Rosario began his career in insurance and is currently chair of Metro Pacific Corp.'s executive committee.

And, despite a request from Malacañang to expedite the nomination of former Foreign Secretary Domingo Siazon to be the country's new ambassador to Japan, the Commission on Appointments yesterday ended up bypassing his appointment.

"Time just ran out," Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said of yesterday's CA meeting at the Senate, the last one in the 11th Congress, which adjourns today.

This means that Siazon will have to be reappointed at the next CA meeting in August after the new Congress shall have been sworn in.

Senate majority leader Francisco Tatad said that while the lack of a quorum at the CA was the reason Siazon's nomination was not acted upon, the meeting also saw Sen. Sergio Osmeña III trying to block the ex-foreign official's posting to Tokyo.

*Nazareno and Christine Avendaño*

## Iranian denies casing Dos Palmas

TWO foreign nationals who had been linked to the kidnapping of 20 persons from a Palawan resort by the Abu Sayyaf yesterday invited a police inquiry "so we could clear our names."

Mansour Maherolnaghsh, a long-time Iranian resident of the Philippines, and Nazaret Haji Boulghourjian, a Lebanese based in Dubai, said they were willing to face a formal police investigation into their activities at the Dos Palmas resort a few days before the Abu Sayyaf raided the place and took 20 hostages.

In a news conference at the Galleria Suites, Maherolnaghsh said he and

Boulghourjian were "legitimate businessmen" who stayed at the resort from May 24 to 26 as part of a "tour package."

He denied allegations supposedly contained in police intelligence reports that he and his business partner had "cashed" the resort before leaving in the morning of May 26.

Boulghourjian, who returned to Dubai Monday, sent authorities a letter saying he was willing to return if summoned. Reporters were shown a copy of the letter.

"I strongly deny this police report. The only crime I committed is being an Iranian because in the eyes of some people, being

Iranian is a crime. That's racism," said Maherolnaghsh, 42, who faced the media with his Filipino wife, Teresita, and their two teenage children.

"Have you heard of any terrorists who gave their real names, phone numbers and addresses (when they checked in at the resort)?" he asked.

Maherolnaghsh said he has resided in the Philippines since 1977. He said that over a year ago, he and Boulghourjian put up a firm called Nazo Building Materials Inc. to engage in the distribution of flooring materials.

*Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

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## Win some, lose some

BY NORMAN BORDADORA

PERCENTAGE-WISE more anti-Estrada legislators won reelection or election to higher office in the May 14 polls, although in actual number more pro-Estrada solons won seats.

Research conducted by the Church-run Radio Veritas showed that 80.851 percent of representatives who had voted to impeach former President Joseph Estrada were elected or reelected, compared to 78.333 percent of their colleagues who had voted against impeachment.

In actual numbers, though, the study showed that 38 of 47 pro-impeachment congressmen and 47 of 60 anti-impeachment legislators won their races.

The biggest winners were senators-elect Joker Arroyo and Manuel Villar whose popularity was boosted by their strong anti-Estrada stance at the impeachment trial.

Former speaker Villar rammed the Articles of Impeachment through the House while then Makati representative Arroyo led the panel that vigorously prosecuted the impeachment case against Estrada.

Except for Ron Libarios and Sergio Apostol, the other prosecution panel members, namely, Salacnib Bateria, Clavel Martinez, Oscar Moreno, Antonio Nachura and Oscar Martinez, won reelection.

Bateria won in the first district of Ilocos Sur, Martinez in the fourth district of Cebu, Moreno in the first district of Misamis Oriental, Nachura in the second district of Western Samar and Rodriguez in the third district of Pampanga.

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## INQUIRER IN HK

Members of the INQUIRER delegation, led by INQUIRER president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez and editor in chief Letty Jimenez Magsanoc, take a break during the ongoing 54th World Newspaper Congress and the 8th World Editors Forum Conference in Hong Kong. Others in photo are (from left) Renato Reinoso, senior vice president for sales and marketing, board member Paolo Prieto and managing editor Jose Ma Nolasco.

## Ombudsman asserts right over perjury case vs Erap

THE OFFICE of the Ombudsman asserted yesterday its authority to file a perjury case against former President Joseph Estrada.

Overall Deputy Ombudsman Margarito Gervacio said the agency had "sweeping constitutional and statutory powers" and serves as the legal custodian of the statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN) of top national elective officials.

These functions, he said, allow the Ombudsman to file charges against officials who falsify their SALNs.

Estrada lawyer Rene Saguisag had questioned the Ombudsman's authority to file a perjury complaint against his client.

Saguisag said it was the Civil Service

Commission that should have initiated the filing of charges following an investigation.

The perjury case stemmed from Estrada's alleged failure to provide the correct information on his SALN for 1999.

The deposed leader had listed a net worth of P35 million while testimony and a paper trail that surfaced at his impeachment trial allegedly showed his assets to be around P3 billion.

Saguisag said Estrada should have been given a chance to correct his SALN before he was charged.

"The filing of a SALN under oath is not a matter of hide and seek, where an official can understate his assets with impunity and cor-

rect it when he is caught," Gervacio answered.

"If we follow Saguisag's suggestion, transparency in the filing of SALNs would be history," he said.

Gervacio said the perjury case lodged against Estrada before the Sandiganbayan "was not about the non-filing, mis-filing or late-filing of his SALN, which could be corrected by asserting under oath that a mistake had been committed."

He said the difference between P35 million and P3 billion was "not a difference of a few thousand pesos but billions. The falsification was clearly not correctable as a criminal act had been consummated."

Cathy C. Yamsuan

## Prosecutors shrug off plan to charge Chavit

BY VOLT CONTRERAS

PROSECUTORS in the Estrada trial yesterday shrugged off the reported plan of defense lawyers to insist on including juetengate whistleblower, Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, among those charged with economic plunder along with the deposed president.

One of them, private lawyer Toy Nepomuceno, said the Sandiganbayan could only find a ground for stripping Singson of state witness status and include him in the charge sheet if his testimony would be deemed "material" or he if would backtrack from taking the stand.

"Governor Singson is still protected by the law granting him immunity since the impeachment trial (days)," Nepomuceno told a press conference.

Nepomuceno was referring to a presidential decree issued by then President Ferdinand Marcos extending immunity to a person who would come out to testify against a public official who had forced that person to commit bribery.

"That decree was issued primarily to flush out bribery," he said, adding that this law was invoked in granting state witness status to Singson as early as the impeachment trial.

He said Singson qualified to benefit under this law especially when other impeachment trial witnesses like Emma Lim and Menchu Ichon, both his



SINGSON

employees, "corroborated" the governor's allegations that Estrada used him as his bagman in collecting bribe money from gambling lords.

From the justice department, state prosecutor Richard Fadullon said the Office in the Ombudsman already cleared Singson of any criminal liability from the time it issued a resolution in early April approving the filing of criminal cases against Estrada, et al.

In the same forum, Fadullon said Estrada lawyers are apparently bent on undermining Singson's credibility in hopes of

eventually weakening the plunder case against the ex-president.

But to graft investigator Jose de Jesus, this latest ploy by the Estrada camp is just another dilatory tactic.

"Nobody can really stop them from doing that, but the law gives the Ombudsman the power to determine whom it will grant immunity," he said.

"This is one of the reasons why we still can't start with the trial proper."

On Monday, sources in the Estrada legal team disclosed of the plan to file a "motion to implead" Singson anytime this week.

During the impeachment trial, Singson openly admitted collecting jueteng bribes for Estrada and said he would be willing to be charged and jailed provided he would share the cell with the ex-president and former buddy.

## Aussies want RP bananas banned

SYDNEY—Banana growers called Wednesday for a ban on banana imports from the Philippines, saying the fruit carries exotic diseases that would devastate the Australian industry.

The Philippines has applied to export bananas to Australia, but local growers claim the move would introduce five diseases collectively known as "The Black Plague"—Black Sigatoka, Moko, Bugtok, Freckle and Bract Mosaic.

The Australian Banana Growers' Council said a recent study had found it would cost the local industry almost \$1 billion Australian dollars (US\$515 million) to treat just two of the diseases, and production would be slashed by more than 20 percent.

Growers would have to increase chemical sprays and the added costs could mean job losses for plantation workers, according to the Center for International Economics study, which was commissioned by the Banana Growers' Council.

"In the Philippines, growers have to spray up to 40 times a year to control Black Sigatoka, but now the disease is developing resistance to those sprays and intensive management programs have to be designed to keep it in check," Council chairman Len Collins said.

"Australia doesn't want these diseases and there's no logical reason why we should import bananas from the Philippines—or anywhere else—when we can't guarantee they'll be free from disease," he said.

Collins said Black Sigatoka was introduced to one Australian banana-growing region earlier this year, and led to commercial plantations being destroyed. The outbreak has since been contained, he said.

Because of its remoteness, Australia has remained largely free of many plant and livestock diseases that have devastated agriculture in other parts of the world.

AP

## Drivers split on bid to hike fare

BY ABIGAIL L. HO

JEEPNEY drivers are divided over a petition to increase fare by at least 50 centavos.

"It is not yet time for a fare hike," said Romualdo Maranan, president of the Federation of Jeepney Operators and Drivers Associations of the Philippines.

With this, Maranan said his group would file an opposition to the petition of another jeepney drivers' group, the Philippine Confederation of Drivers' Organizations-Alliance of Concerned Transport Operators (PCDO-ACTO) to increase fare by 50 centavos.

Maranan said there is no reason to increase jeepney fare yet since this will only burden the already troubled masses.

"Even with the increase in oil prices, we can't pass the burden to the commuters. The prices of spare parts and maintenance services did not rise anyway, so there is no need to raise the fare," he added.

PCDO-ACTO president Efren de Luna said a fare hike is justifiable because prices of spare parts and maintenance services, contrary to Maranan's assertion, had gone up since oil prices rose three weeks ago.

"Even prices of basic commodities and students' tuition had gone up," he added.

## Customs closes in on Subic smugglers

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—Customs officials here said they are closing in on leaders of smuggling syndicates in this freeport who are close allies of deposed President Joseph Estrada.

In a statement, Billy Bibit, Subic freeport district customs collector, said these smuggling lords used to be "untouchable" because they were associates and drinking buddies of the fallen president.

"They are not untouchable now," he said.

Bibit refused to identify these smuggling lords,

saying that to do so could jeopardize ongoing operations against them.

A former colonel and leader of the Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabansa (RAM); Bibit said he had organized a special team to arrest smugglers and charge them in court.

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## OPINION

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## Proclaimed, at last

THE COMMISSION on Elections proclaimed on Tuesday the winners of the May senatorial elections whose flaws commanded more attention than the results. To be sure, it is now official that the administration's People Power Coalition won the election by a thin margin—eight winners against four from the Puwersa ng Masa and one independent. Still it succeeded in increasing the number of pro-administration senators to 12 compared to the opposition's nine. Although the government ticket failed to make the 13-0 sweep it aspired for (nobody took this seriously, except probably the PPC's spokesperson Dodi Limcaoco), there can be no doubt that President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has been given a strong enough base from which to negotiate support for her legislative agenda.

There is more reason to be concerned over the flaws of the electoral process than the prospects of a constructive working relationship between the government and opposition parties. The elections were the first to be held in this country in the new millennium, but it took the Comelec 22 days to count the votes and proclaim the winners. It has taken longer to count the votes now than it did nearly a hundred years ago when we first held elections whose results were transmitted by telegraph and even by carabao-driven sledge to the municipal and provincial tabulation centers. Given the stunning technological advances of the 21st century, marked by the computerization of information, there can be no more damning evidence of how primitive is our system of counting votes than the 22-day gap between the balloting and the completion of the tabulation.

Just last Sunday, Peru, a developing Third World country beset with politics as turbulent as ours, held its presidential election after the departure of the autocratic and corrupt President Alberto Fujimori. By Tuesday, two days after the polls, the world knew about the victory of Alejandro Toledo in the run-off against former President Alan Garcia.

It is hard to explain why it is that as we increase our experience in democracy and as technology facilitates the speed of the election process, it takes longer to count the results and our elections continue to be marred by widespread charges of cheating.

The last elections were not any more or any less clean than previous elections. The electoral process can only be as flawed as some members of the Comelec which oversees the election year in and year out. In last Tuesday's proclamation rites, the flaw was highlighted by the refusal of the controversial Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco to participate on the grounds that the procedures adopted in the canvassing were "flawed." Part of the faults of the process can be traced to her scuttling of plans to modernize and computerize the vote reporting and counting system. Taking a self-righteous posture, Tancangco speaks of "living with my conscience," as if she could evade responsibility for the large-scale disenfranchisement of voters whose names were erased from the registry rolls which were supposed to have been purged of impurities.

Since Tancangco and her cohorts in the Comelec have a fixed tenure, we may have to make do with keeping the electoral system frozen in the tundras of the 1900s, unless they are removed by impeachment from their positions where they can continue to obstruct the modernization of the system.

That said, we may now turn to the results which, fortunately, foreshadow a Senate where, despite the close outcome, the administration can negotiate a consensus with the opposition and the so-called independents like Noli de Castro whose identification with any social or political philosophy is as clear as seepage from the sewer. In the last elections, a number of moderates, including those from the opposition PnM, have been elected, allowing the organization of an agenda based on programs and policies. The PnM is expected to fade into oblivion after the polls. In the first place, the name is a misnomer since none of its candidates had any valid claim to represent the poor, except to incite them to rebellion.

A critical collaboration between the sitting president and the opposition has been the hallmark of every Congress. President Macapagal has shown that she has the capacity to push reform legislation in the ratification of the Omnibus Power Bill which had been tossed around the legislature for six years. The entente cordial between the President and the outgoing Congress is a good sign of future cooperation between her and the next Congress on programs designed for the national interest.



## Comelec flip-flops on poll issues

ADMITTEDLY, the last elections were the worst we ever had. And the reason is that we have the most incompetent Commission on Elections ever. The incompetence (or corruption?) of the Comelec of 1985, which declared Ferdinand Marcos the winner over Corason Aquino, triggered the first People Power on 'Edsa that chased the Marcoses out of Malacañang and the Philippines. But that Comelec pales in comparison to the present Comelec.

The present Comelec can't make up its mind. It keeps flip-flopping on election issues so that instead of clarifying, it confuses, complicates and convolutes them. For example, in the three-term limit for local government officials, the Comelec has flip-flopped no less than three times.

The latest Comelec somersaults are on the disqualification cases against Gov. Leonardo Roman of Bataan and Mayor Francis Tolentino of Tagaytay. The two cases are similar, though not exactly the same.

Tolentino first ran for mayor of Tagaytay in May 1992, but it was his opponent, Benjamin R. Erni, who was proclaimed the winner. Tolentino filed an election protest and on July 25, 1994, the Comelec finally annulled the proclamation of Erni and declared Tolentino the winner, a decision which was later affirmed by the Supreme Court. Tolentino assumed office as city mayor after two years and three months, serving only 11 months of the remainder of the three-year term. Subsequently, he ran for the same post in the 1995 and 1998 elections and won in both.

In the case of Roman, he won in the 1993 recall elections to serve the unexpired term of then Gov. Enrique Garcia. He then ran for reelection and won in the 1995 and 1998 regular elections.

Thus, both Tolentino and Roman were not able to serve in full their first terms. Including the two succeeding terms, they were not able to serve the maximum nine years mandated by the Constitution. Question: Did they serve three terms or only two terms? Were they disqualified from running

## AS I SEE IT



Neal H. Cruz

for reelection in the last May polls?

Yes, claimed the complainants: rival candidate Miriam Mendoza in the case against Tolentino, and voters Fred Ramos and Roger Galang in the case against Roman. No, the defendants countered of course.

What did the Comelec say? Disqualified, it said initially. Then it reversed the first decision and declared both qualified to run in the last May elections, where both won (Roman ran unopposed).

The Constitution provides:

"Sec. 8. The term of office of elective local officials, except barangay officials which shall be determined by law, shall be three years and no such officials shall serve for more than three consecutive terms. Voluntary renunciation of the office for any length of time shall not be considered as an interruption in the continuity of his service for the full term for which he was elected."

The Local Government Code has the same provision.

The limitation is clear enough. The problem arises when one term is not served in full. If a candidate wins an election protest but serves only one week of the remainder of the term (as often happens in cases decided by the Comelec), is he deemed to have served one full term?

Yes, said Constitutional Commission delegates Joaquin Bernas and Hilario Davide Jr., now Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. "If one is elected representative to serve the unexpired term of another," wrote Bernas in his book "The 1987 Constitution," "that term, no matter how

short, will be considered one term for purposes of computing the number of terms allowed."

Davide, during a Con-Con session in Aug. 7, 1986, was asked if a senator elected in a special election to serve the unexpired term of another would be considered to have served one full term. He answered: "Yes, because we speak of 'term,' and if there is a special election, he will serve only for the unexpired portion of that particular term plus one more term for the Senator and two more terms for the Members of the Lower House."

It is different in the case of "succession." If a governor or mayor dies, resigns, becomes incapacitated, or is removed from office, the vice governor or vice mayor, respectively, succeeds by operation of law and serves the unexpired portion of the term. Those periods served are not considered terms of the successors and are not counted for the purpose of counting the official's consecutive terms.

To illustrate: The three-year presidential term of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is not counted as her "term." It is still the term of President Estrada, to which she succeeded. A president cannot run for reelection, but in this case, President Macapagal can, as she is not considered to have served one term yet.

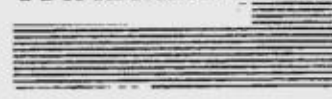
On the other hand, the 13th senator elected in the last elections (Honasan or Recto?) will serve the unexpired three-year portion of the term of Teofisto Guingona, who was appointed vice president. That is counted as one full term for either Honasan or Recto. If it is Honasan, he can no longer run for reelection in 2004, as senators are limited to only two terms. If it is Recto, he can run for reelection since his present term will only be his first.

The difference is this: the first case was "succession," the second case was "election." President Macapagal "succeeded" Erap to the presidency by operation of law. Honasan or Recto was "elected" to a vacancy in the Senate.

(To be continued)

## Saving Private Bayan

## WINDMILLS



Jerry Barican

THERE is the old ethnic joke, politically incorrect these days, about the number of gears one nation's tanks supposedly have. There are four, it says, three in reverse and one forward, in case there were an attack from the rear. There is the lucky army. Some of ours have no gears. They've probably been cannibalized to keep other equipment running.

Those who have faulted the military for their shortcomings during the ongoing hostage crisis should begin by faulting themselves for not providing them with the tools to do the job. For too long, there has been knee-jerk opposition to modernizing and upgrading the capabilities of the Armed Forces. This attitude stems from several sources.

There is a residual fear that the military may someday seek an inappropriate political role. There is a utopian belief that if money were poured into social services instead, then security would somehow take care of itself. There is the sheer inadequacy of resources coupled with the military's lack of a political constituency. There is fierce opposition from ideological sympathizers of our insurgencies.

Events of the past few years have shown how mistaken these attitudes are. The Communist and Muslim insurgencies, in practice, constitute a domestic two-front undeclared war. Our borders with Indonesia and Malaysia require adequate patrols. Our aquatic resources require protection from outside poachers. The Spratlys and Scarborough Shoal demonstrate our international weaknesses. Then there is piracy and brigandage.

The blame for these inadequacies cannot be laid principally upon the shoulders of our military. Through the years, the number of our dead and wounded speak eloquently of the sacrifices they have made while equipped to a standard better suited to World War I than the 21st century. All the talk of modernization is just that, talk. Of the P8 billion raised years ago from the sale of Fort Bonifacio, only P5 billion has been

released. Little or none has been spent. Even then, that would be the price of a single American surveillance plane of the type the Chinese seized in Hainan.

To move forward, we need an updating of systems and doctrine. And we need some money to fund it. To begin with, we need a new national consensus on the role of the military, the citizen's role in security and the priority we place on these needs. The current legal edifice, built around Commonwealth Act No. 1 and succeeding laws, is excellent 19th century "a Nation in Arms" doctrine which technology has rendered obsolete.

We must repeal Commonwealth Act No. 1 along with its ridiculous systems like the Reserve Officers' Training Corps which, aside from having no military value in the current century, breeds corruption, wastes resources and promotes bullying and abuse. The statement of nine University Belt presidents (UST, FEU, UE, UM, CEU, NU, MLQU, Adamson and Arellano) "The ROTC: Excising A Cancer" is thoughtful and timely.

Such a change would be highly symbolic. We would recognize that massed parades, assembling and disassembling obsolete weapons, and mass mobilization have no practical role in today's military. But we need to do more. Intelligence capabilities, both human and signal, need to be vastly upgraded. Security begins and even ends with intelligence. We need to make annual capital investments in equipment, communications, command and control. That includes fast patrol boats and planes suited to our archipelago.

We need to put in the systems to target economic assistance to those areas where insurgencies have grown the most because of poverty. To this end, Cabinet Cluster E should schedule joint meetings with its social and economic development counterparts at least once a quarter to focus precisely on these targets.

The procurement and open bidding reforms begun under former Secretary Orlando Mercado need to be sustained. Open electronic Internet posted bidding for all items will largely prevent the possibility of collusion and corruption.

Above all, it is time for the administration to introduce a comprehensive new national defense review. That review, more broad and far-reaching than the AFP Modernization Law, can have the same role Commonwealth Act No. 1 had in the 1930s. It will create debate and eventually consensus over the role of the military and the resources, both legal and material, it needs to do its job right.

If only a fraction of the amount that annually goes to Internal Revenue Allotment were instead devoted upon national security, the effects on investment and economic growth would be disproportionately advantageous. We also need to spell out the role of, and corresponding resources needed by each service. It's time to consider creating a Naval Academy. Finally, some practical way of depoliticizing the military must be found.

Despite grave difficulties, the government has confronted its current problems in the field with some success. It is pursuing the Abu Sayyaf relentlessly, if with difficulty. It has refused to pay ransom. It is considering the declaration of martial law in specific areas of military operation against the Abu Sayyaf. Although such declarations have little direct military effect, it will reinforce the government's legal ability to restore order in Basilan.

All of this, as we can see, will take time—decades, not just years. But if we had begun this 10 years ago, we wouldn't be facing these problems today. So let us begin.



## Military ought to reassess tactics

### POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda  
Oliveras-Cunanan



gested by the military. The issue has predictably stirred up a national debate. Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, the chief architect of Marcos' martial law regime, is battling for its imposition in Basilan, citing among the arguments that curfew can then be imposed, thus making it easier for the military to restrict movements there.

That argument makes sense, but unfortunately the decision to impose martial law, even in a limited locale, would inevitably be attended by tremendous hysteria, especially among the human rights victims of Marcos and politicians who want to look progressive. Thus, while the military would benefit from martial law in Basilan, the political costs to the Macapagal administration could be tremendous. This is what she has to weigh.

The martial law we're talking about in 2001 is very different from the species in 1971, for the 1987 Constitution saw to it that this difference is enshrined in its provisions, doubtless because of the many abuses in the 1970s. Significantly the present Constitution contains built-in provisions to protect the people against abuses, especially by the executive.

As stated in Sec. 18, Article VII of the Constitution, the president can declare martial law in the country or any part thereof for a period of 60 days, unlike one generation ago when the nine-year rule was lifted only for the arrival of Pope Paul VI. Moreover, within 48 hours from its proclamation or the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, the president is required to submit a report to Congress, which is empowered to revoke this declaration by a vote of majority of all its members voting jointly, and the president cannot set this revocation aside. Congress also has the power to extend and set the limit for martial law or the suspension of the writ.

Aside from this power given to Congress, the Supreme Court may upon petition by any citizen review the sufficiency of the factual basis of the proclamation or suspension, and must promulgate its decision

within 30 days from its filing. What is also significant is that unlike in 1972, today the imposition of martial law does not suspend the operation of the Constitution or the civil courts or legislative assemblies. Moreover, military courts cannot acquire jurisdiction over civilians; neither is the privilege of the writ automatically suspended. In the event of a suspension of this privilege, any person arrested or detained shall be judicially charged within three days, otherwise he has to be released. As Human Rights Chair Aurora Recina, stressed on TV during the declaration of a state of rebellion following the May 1 assault on Malacanang, at no time will human rights be suspended in a martial law proclamation.

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Former Senate President Jovy Salonga, in a brief conversation with this columnist yesterday, stressed that while the President can indeed impose martial law in Basilan and its merits vis-à-vis the military operation there can be argued, she should weigh whether Congress is in the mood to approve this proclamation. Salonga said Ms. Macapagal should not risk a rejection this early by Congress.

He's correct. Two senior Senate leaders, Senate President Nene Pimentel and Sen. Franklin Drilon, as well as influential groups such as the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, are openly against the declaration of martial law in Basilan. Recall that the President showed strong leadership when she successfully got the lame duck Congress to pass the power reform bill. But the gains from that sweet victory could be nullified if martial law were to be rejected by Congress. Citizens perhaps could see a justification for martial law if it would assure a quick victory for the troops, but there is no such guarantee. As Salonga put it, even the United States lost the guerrilla war in Vietnam.

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What the military has to do, it seems, is to make a hard reassessment of tactics. Obviously it is fighting a conventional war when the enemy has already opted for guerrilla warfare. Definitely the AFP could use better equipment and intelligence and communications material, especially the Navy. But all this takes money. I say again: Let's not waste precious funds on more tourism promotion, as Dick Gordon wants; that is throwing good money after bad in the light of recent events. Use the precious funds on strengthening much-needed military assets to rout the bandit group. And only when we have restored peace and order should we promote our beautiful islands.

## Sense of country

### THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado  
de Quiros



mation of our abject condition is gone, applications for visa now being coursed through the mail), the thought of "going to America" is not something the middle class entirely keeps idle.

Which makes me wonder if that is not one of the things that are keeping this country backward. You go to other Asian countries, and you won't see that attitude at all. Of course, many of those countries are now also sending a good deal of their workforce abroad. Sri Lanka is one of our fiercest competitors in the OCW market, particularly in the market for domestic. But you won't see the rich or poor of those countries routinely saying when things get rough, "If things don't get better, I'm gone." We're the only ones who do.

The instinct of leaving the country for abroad, hypothetical or not, realizable or not, is not something other Asians naturally possess or show. Other Asians had despots too (some, like Singapore and Malaysia, still do), but none of their tyrants instinctively thought to stash their loot abroad in anticipation of the time when they would have to flee for more hospitable parts. Suharto stole his country blind too, probably more than Marcos, but he didn't take out the money, he plowed it in various businesses in Indonesia. More to the point, he didn't go anywhere; he's still in Indonesia, facing charges of corruption.

I grant part of the reason for this ignorance of opportunities abroad or lack of preparation for living abroad: other Asians do not speak English, do not take to new languages or lifestyles easily, or have not been exposed to Western culture. But a great deal of it is also pride and passion for the country. They cannot think of living elsewhere because they think they're already living in the best place in the world. It isn't perfect, but one can always try to make things better. Which brings me to the consequences of those dif-

fering attitudes. You see yourself as living nowhere else but in your country for the rest of your life, you will do everything in your power to make your country better. You prefer to live in your country for the rest of your life notwithstanding the allure of foreign shores, you will have a sense of urgency, or desperation, to make your country better. You have a sense that rich and poor, you and your compatriots, are in the same boat and that the both of you will drown if the boat keels over, you will make sure the other guy doesn't rock it too violently.

That is not our sense of things at all. That is so whether we are talking of the rich or the poor. The rich of course are notorious in thinking America, living America and breathing America—or Europe, if the family thinks of itself as being too cultured for America. The same people think nothing of razing the forests, ransacking the seas and polluting the air since they can always send their kids to study and live abroad, if they themselves do not do it. It's not just Marcos who did that; this country's rich contributed mightily there. The poor themselves have found an escape hatch in the overseas labor market. Many do not particularly mind trashing the country because they can always leave it—or think they can. Many overseas Filipino workers already have second families abroad, particularly in the Arab countries where Filipino women outnumber the men two to one.

The further attitude that this breeds is that we ourselves do not need to do anything to make this country better, others have to do it for us. That is implicit in the vow that if things do not get better, we are going to leave it. It is as if something is owed us. We are only spectators, or observers, or people with the option to stay or go. Or if we do something at all for the country, it is only with the scornful attitude that the *mamang* can take it or leave it, we will only go so far. "We try to educate them, but they still insist on mounting an 'Edsa III' and voting the way they do. I can do only so much. *Bahala kayo sa buhay n'yo*, I'm off to America."

Is it a wonder Americans look scornfully at them when they get there? Americans do not say that about their country.

\*\*\*  
Comments are welcome at [dequiros@asia.com](mailto:dequiros@asia.com)

## The boy on the beach

FIRST, I lost Michael. Then Stephen. I kept asking myself: Doesn't anything good happen in this world anymore?

Michael was my best friend. And Stephen—well, he was my everything, my greatest treasure for he was my father. When he died, I felt that I lost everything. But still, I managed to smile because of the masks I wore every day. It wasn't difficult pretending that I was moving on when I was with a lot of people. But when night fell and all I had were

my thoughts to keep me company, the painful memories of the past, the guilt feelings, the anger and more would wage war against my sanity until the first streaks of daylight came.

Nobody knew these inner battles that I had to fight every day. There was no time to run, no one to turn to, nowhere to hide, no escape. These battles often left me emotionally drained, breathless and gasping for air—and for peace of mind. Eventually, it wore me down so much that I felt the time had come for me to say goodbye.

Then I met Daniel. I was on the beach for what supposedly be my last taste of the salty water when I first saw him. For the last time, I wanted to feel the soft breeze gently caressing my face. For the last time, I pondered my bitter past and troubled present, not anymore wondering if there would still be a future.

I didn't realize how melancholic I'd become until I saw a large tear-drop making quite an impression on the sand. I raised my head and there he was, right in front of me, a boy about 7 years old and severely malnourished. His clothes, or what was left of them, were torn, and his bones were straining to stick out of his skin.

He came up to me and smiled. He stared at me intently, his bewildered brown eyes asking a million questions, none of which I could answer.

Ashamed of having been seen crying, I looked away and ran, leaving a wide-eyed little boy and a trail of footprints in the sand.

I went to work in corporate attire and makeup for the last time. It seemed rather odd, but somehow I couldn't forget the boy I had seen on the beach. The way he looked tugged at my heart. And his eyes...there was something in those eyes, an untold story perhaps, or a pain that could not be much different from mine. It was strange, but suddenly I felt a strong urge to see him, to uncover that which "lies beneath," and maybe to rediscover my own self.

The beach looked deserted that afternoon. There were no children around and no peals of laughter; just the music of seawater touching the shore. I went from one hut to the other, asking if there lived a little boy of about 7. I described him in detail, but they couldn't understand me, and I couldn't understand them either. The old folks spoke a different language.

Frustrated, I turned to go and promised myself that I would go back there the following day. I totally forgot that tomorrows were not supposed to be a part of my plans anymore.

It rained the following day, and the wind brought a certain chill right down to my spine. But it didn't stop me from driving back to the beach. When I got out of the car, I saw him walking from a distance.

"Hey!" I cried out to him, but he couldn't hear me. I ran to catch up with him. "Hey," I said again, shivering in the cold.

He was wearing the same ragged clothes he had the previous day. He looked surprised. I couldn't blame him. He must have thought I was crazy. Then, he smiled that same toothless smile that captured my heart. "Oh, it's you, the lady at the beach," he said.

This time, I smiled back. There were no masks, no walls, nothing. I simply smiled back. It felt good. Really good. I hadn't smiled like that in what seemed like a very long time.

Daniel was orphaned since birth. He lived with his mother's alcoholic sister, who constantly beat him up and left him no food. Sometimes, he said, he wished she would never come home. She wasn't of much use when she was there, anyway. If she wasn't screaming, she was sleeping or beating the hell out of him. But he had nowhere else to go. "Aunt Stella," as he called her, was the only relative he knew.

Daniel never gave up hoping that one day he would see the world the way it was created to be. He wanted to travel. And fly. And build bridges and big houses. He was sick and tired of selling fish at four in the morning, but for now, that was all he could do to earn money for his dreams.

Daniel was hungry for life. One could simply see it in his eyes, or sense it when he talked. He had known suffering from the moment he was born, but he never wallowed in self-pity. He embraced his sufferings, believing that someday he would be free.

My daily walks with Daniel on the beach made me realize how self-centered I had been. My pain seemed like a pod compared with his.

I learned a very important lesson from Daniel: There is no way to undo the past, but we can weave the future into a masterpiece.

Now I know that God indeed loves me. He wouldn't have sent me an angel if He didn't.

Noelle, 27, is an aspiring writer based in Iloilo.

## WHATEVER HAPPENED TO . . . ?

### Murder of Chavit supporter

THE CASE against councilor Jose Corrales of Narvacan, Ilocos Sur, and several others, including several policemen, was ordered transferred to a Manila court by the Supreme Court in October 1999 following complaints of harassment and intimidation.

The case stemmed from the death from gunshot wounds of Juanito Sabado, a supporter of Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis Singson, on April 3, 1993. Sabado's wife Corazon requested the change of venue, claiming that the suspects were being protected by former Rep. Eric Singson, the governor's nephew whom he beat in the 1998 elections.

A case of murder was filed against 11 suspects at the sala of Regional Trial Court Judge Ulpiano Campos in Ilocos Sur on June 3, 1997. Among those charged, aside from Corrales, were SPO1 Jesus Rea, SPO2 Moises Cahamungan Jr., SPO3 Ronald Cabañas, SPO3 Adonis Blanco and SPO3 Marcelo Cabansag.

On July 9, 1997, Sabado's wife filed a petition with the Supreme Court seeking a transfer of venue for the trial which was denied on March 3, 1998 for lack of merit. On July 13 that year, the accused moved for a reinvestigation of the case, which was granted on Sept. 30. On Nov. 17, the Department of Justice decided to pursue the case against the accused.

The court ordered the arrest of the 11 suspects on March 26, 1999, but it was recalled when Campos granted their request for a more thorough evaluation on April 20. After summoning the prosecution witnesses and evaluating the strength of the evidence, the court again ordered their arrest on May 10. Corrales, Cahamungan, Rea, Cabañas and Cabansag surrendered a week later.

On May 31, 1999, a motion for change of venue was again filed by the prosecution. It was endorsed by the court on June 17, the same day five of the accused pleaded "not guilty."

On July 16, the Court of Appeals issued a temporary restraining order stopping Campos from conducting hearings until the Supreme Court acted on the petition.

On July 27, 1999 the Supreme Court ordered the transfer of the case to any court in Manila. The TRO was then recalled and the five detainees were transferred to the Manila City Jail on Aug. 12.

The case was raffled off to the sala of Judge Luis Arranz of Branch 11 on Sept. 22. Arranz ordered the arrest of the rest of the accused on Nov. 11.

Case status: The prosecution finished presenting its evidence last March 30. The defense started its own presentation on April 30. Six of the accused remain at large: Blanco, Mariano Cabanting Jr., Jaime Escalona, Ernesto Casioño, Diosdado Dominguez and Ernesto Dominguez.

Armin P. Adina, PDI Research Department

## Microcredit: 'The little way'

I FEEL like a millionaire.

The morning I was writing this piece, the day after I had a weekend of guilt-free fun and frolic at Villa Escudero with friends who work among the poorest, someone knocked on my door and handed me P600. The amount was sent to me by a woman to whom I lent P10,000 last Dec. 25. My notebook says she has given back a total of P5,300 these last six months. That is more than 50 percent.

For January and February she gave P750 twice. Last March it was P2,000. I was stunned.

Why such a big amount? I asked my friend and neighbor, an environmentalist who saw the borrower regularly and who was the initiator of our little undertaking. Maybe she wanted to show she was doing well, she answered, while we sipped great coffee in the garden. Tell her to take it easy, I said.

Then I received P600 every month for April, May and now, for June. By the end of 2001 this woman, Aling Paning, would have paid back almost all that she had borrowed.

Aling Paning started a *turo-turo* business in the outskirts of Metro Manila last January. She's never done this before. The P10,000 that I lent her was for the new pots, pans and other cooking utensils, for the roof over the small eating place, benches and, of course, the menu. Amazing is how I describe what she has done with the P10,000 (which can buy one pair of signature shoes).

Aling Paning's food business is thriving. Her location is ideal: it is in front of her small house and beside a new beautiful bamboo *kubo*-style *sari-sari* store whose operator, also a woman, also started with "micro" money. It is along a highway that cuts across lush rice fields where frogs break into a symphony when the rain starts to fall. The location is ideal for a quick stop for a meal. Most of the customers are jeepney drivers.

There was a little problem though. Aling Paning, we found out, was slow in giving out change. Customers had to wait while she computed in her head. Arithmetic was not part of her genius as she didn't have much schooling and hadn't handled much money. Aling Paning's small daughter did better. The solution: a calculator. I think that worked.

### HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres  
P. Doyo



So what is this all about?

Some of my friends and I thought we should do some hands-on "poverty alleviation" by putting our money where our big mouths are. We could simply have patied ourselves on the back and said we're already doing our part by being immersed in our respective sectors: the media, the NGO-environment network, the academe, the church, the development field, etc. But, we wondered, is there something really small we could do ourselves, something outside of our paying jobs, dangerous careers and powerful institutions, something we could call our own—not so we'd feel good about ourselves, but so we'd hurt a little more somewhere?

"Somewhere," it turned out, meant our micro-pockets. At least that's where we thought we could start. We don't have a name, a registration, foreign funding or anybody's blessing. But experience with the poor and the rejected (by society, institutions and, uh, the banks), close encounters with pure pain, diminishment and death—we think we have.

So there—a bunch of crazies not answerable to anyone, practicing "the little way" a.k.a. micromicro-credit. I reveal this for the first time here with some trepidation, inviting a few laughs and suspicion.

I mention these things because last week I was invited to a briefing where the main speaker was the multi-awarded Dr. Muhammad Yunus, 60, chair of Grameen Trust which started the worldwide microfinance movement that has given a better life to the world's poorest. I was invited because the organizers thought I'd be interested in the subject of poverty alleviation, and not because I knew microcredit of some kind or whatever it is called. I know little

about how small loans are done in a big way.

Citigroup, Grameen Trust and Philnet, sponsored the Grameen Asia Microfinance Summit held at the Asian Institute of Management last week. Among those present were successful local Grameen replicators.

By the way, Yunus, the man who started Grameen, received the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Foundation Award in 1984. He was about 40 years old at the time. The recognition, Yunus said, helped boost the microfinance movement which he started in the 1970s in a small village in Bangladesh through small loans to the poor, especially women. See, a little affirmation goes a long way. The Grameen way has since taken root in many parts of the world. The latest is in war-torn Kosovo.

When asked why Grameen has a bias for women, Yunus answered: "Because women are good people. Poor women are a good credit risk, even in the most difficult economic times. They are the best judge of their own situation and they know best how to use credit when it is available, especially when supervised and encouraged by their peers. Small business loans pave the way to breaking their poverty cycle. In just one program operating in Southern Luzon, over 1,000 women and their families crossed the poverty line between 1997 and 2000."

According to Citigroup's Nina D. Aguas, the microfinance movement has grown tremendously in the region. In the Philippines, there are now 11 Grameen-style projects. In recent years, the number of borrowers has grown from 31,000 to 117,000, the disbursement of loans from \$8 million to \$48 million. And all this has an enviable repayment rate of 93 percent.

Citigroup is the leading underwriter of the global microfinance movement, contributing more than \$3.4 million in 2000. In the Philippines, Citigroup gave a P2.5-million grant to Kazuma, an NGO that provides loans to farmers.

Philnet is the network to approach for training in microfinancing. It can be reached at [philnet@moozcom.com](mailto:philnet@moozcom.com).

Microfinance is not in the curriculum of business schools. Maybe it is learned first and best in the school of the heart.



## Election of senators by region

THE RESULTS of the last senatorial elections show the need for amending the Constitution so that the senators are elected by region or by federal state.

The Senate has a full membership of 24 senators. Every three years, one half of the Senate has to be elected.

In the elections just held, 13 senators had to be elected instead of only 12 to replace those whose terms are expiring by June of this year. The reason is that Sen. Teofisto Guingona, whose term runs until 2004, was appointed vice president by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Among the 11 senators whose terms have not expired, eight come from Luzon, one from the Visayas and two from Mindanao. The eight Luzon senators are: Senators Blas Ople, Vicente Sotto, Teresita Aquino-Oreta, Robert Jaworski, Rodolfo Biazon, Ramon Revilla, Loren

Legarda-Leviste and Rene Cayetano. The senator from the Visayas is John Osmenia. And the two from Mindanao are Robert Barbers and Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

Among the 13 senatorial candidates who won in the last elections, 11 come from Luzon and two from the Visayas. No one comes from Mindanao. The 11 from Luzon are: Noli de Castro, Juan Flavio, Ramon Magsaysay, Francis Pangilinan, Manuel Villar, Panfilo Lacson, Edgardo Angara, Gregorio Honasan, Joker Arroyo, Loi Ejercito Estrada and Ralph Recto. The two Visayan winners are Sergio Osmenia III and Franklin Drilon.

Thus, the new Senate will have 19 senators from Luzon, three from the Visayas and two from Mindanao.

The lopsided Luzon representation in the Senate is unfair to the Visayas and Mindanao. Luzon has roughly one-half of the population

of the country. The Visayas has one-fourth and Mindanao has the other fourth. If proportional representation on the basis of population in the Senate is fair, then Luzon should only have 12 senators and the Visayas and Mindanao should have six each. But because our electoral system chooses the winning candidates on the basis of the greater number of votes they get regardless of where they come from, we wind up with a situation where Luzon senatorial candidates have at least twice the chances of the Visayan and Mindanao senatorial candidates to win. The vote-rich Luzon provinces tend to concentrate their votes on their favorite native sons or daughters and shut out those coming from the Visayas and Mindanao.

If this asymmetrical representation in the Senate is maintained, the age-old complaint of Mindanao against discrimination in terms of employment and budgetary allocations

will persist and continue to fuel the passions of the Mindanaoans against "imperial Manila."

To ensure proportional representation of the people in the Senate, we may have to amend the Constitution so that the senatorial elections are done by region or by federal state. By regionalizing the senatorial elections, all the regions will be assured of representation in the Senate.

The same is true if the elections are done by federal state. Every federal state will elect its own senator or senators to represent them in the legislature of the Federal Republic.

There may also be other salutary effects of regional or federal state senatorial elections. The elections may be more clean and perhaps less expensive than if done nationally.

**AQUILINO Q. PIMENTEL JR.**, Senate president, 6th Floor, Senate of the Philippines, GSIS Bldg., Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City

### THE COUNTRY NEEDS REVENUE REFORMS NOW The Foundation for Economic Freedom fully supports BIR Commissioner Rene Bañez

Most recent studies of the revenue situation in the Philippines tell us that government has been able to collect only about half of potential tax collections. This is perhaps the most prejudicial measure of the state of governance in the country.

The problem at hand is not so much one of tax policy as it is of *tax administration*. The entire mechanism of tax administration needs radical reinvention --- not in the future, but today.

Failure to implement tax administration reforms today will cause our fiscal situation to deteriorate further, given the large deficit overhang inherited from the Estrada presidency. The tight fiscal situation will limit the Macapagal-Arroyo presidency's ability to make economic investments to pull our economy out of the present low-growth path. The same tight fiscal situation will prevent this administration from carrying out its anti-poverty programs effectively.

The most feasible way we could immediately address the plight of the nation's poor is to dramatically reduce the volume of corruption and inefficiency in the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

For years, it has been argued that improved tax administration not new taxes will allow government to raise sufficient revenues without deflating the economy. From the outset, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo has promised effective governance and an unrelenting campaign against corruption.

The BIR is the test case of this pledge.

The Bureau is now led by a person of unquestionable integrity and competence. He is supported by the rank-and-file employees and enjoys the confidence of the civil society groups working for transparent and accountable governance. He has drawn up a blueprint for reform that will allow us to dramatically raise revenues to cover the deficit, increase public investments and make headway in the fight

After extensive consultations with the business community, revenue experts and civil society groups, we are confident that the plan drawn up by Banez will produce the resources required for effective economic governance.

It is not surprising that the reform effort initiated by the new BIR leadership is being resisted by the echelon of revenue officers most closely associated with the corruption and inefficiency that has plagued government's revenue efforts. The old boy's club of district revenue officers has put up a campaign kitty and sought out power brokers not only to frustrate the reform initiatives but to neutralize Rene Banez altogether. They have undertaken a campaign of intrigue and intimidation against the revenue commissioner.

Although the Foundation views this development with concern, we are not surprised. The first enemy of reform are those who benefit from the fruits of corruption and inefficiency.

The Foundation for Economic Freedom calls on the reformers in the Macapagal-Arroyo administration and all groups in civil society anxious to see competent and honest governance to rally behind the revenue reform program. This is the moment to take a decisive step forward for modern governance in the Philippines.

**THE FOUNDATION FOR ECONOMIC FREEDOM**

## Street realities

MORE than a week ago, I read about a syndicate fielding beggars in the streets. I was not surprised by this because they are everywhere, especially at every major intersection or traffic bottleneck in Metro Manila.

You will see blind beggars accompanied by someone who pretends to guide them from one car to the next. Women, who look more than able to wash your laundry, carry helpless (sometimes drugged) children on their shoulders to beg in the heat of the afternoon. You will realize that these so-called "escorts" are healthy: not-so-old men and women who carelessly drag or carry their young or disabled companion from one car to the next until the traffic light turns green.

I always tell my wife, who was initially sympathetic to these people, that she is feeding the syndicate and not the blind person or that little baby. If these "escorts" are truly their relatives who are there to care for their blind loved one, it would be better for them to work as maids, wash laundry or sell cigarettes and have their disabled grandfather or blind and ailing grandmother home, safe from the

sun, the smoke and accidents.

I cannot understand why this goes on. I wonder why politicians, the police and even the President herself never bother to do something about this when they see this every day. Maybe their police escorts are so fast that they cannot even wait for the stoplight to turn green to see the realities of our streets.

Since I don't smoke, I always fill my car's ashtray with coins to give to the poor. I give P2 to P5 to every lone blind or disabled person I see on the road. I feel that I am helping them since they cannot apply for a job and the government is too poor to take care of them. But I never give to the street children who will think that begging is better than looking for a decent job or to those syndicate-escorted beggars who think they can fool everybody.

I suggest that you think twice before you give alms to that beggar at your car window.—NOEL CARPIO, AEC Graphics Inc., Ramax Subd., Quezon City



## The Abu Sayyaf: Ghosts from the past

I AM glad that many television and radio broadcasters refer to the Abu Sayyaf as "*bandidos*" rather than as Muslim rebels. The Abu Sayyaf is neither Islamic nor a group with a political cause.

Nevertheless, calling the Abu Sayyaf bandits may also be too simplistic. The Abu Sayyaf actually represents the past haunting us. I refer here to the system of chiefdoms dating back to precolonial

times. Understanding how that system works may help us to deal with groups like the Abu Sayyaf and, even more importantly, to understand ourselves as a people. This old system of chiefdoms, which remains with us today, creates many more problems than hostagetaking.

**PINOY KASI**



Michael L. Tan

Many of my insights are drawn from reading Laura Lee Junker's "Raiding, Trading and Feasting: The Political Economy of Philippine Chiefdoms," published last year by the Ateneo de Manila University Press. An anthropologist, Junker draws extensively from historical texts, archaeological reports and ethnographies to reconstruct our precolonial political system.

Junker supports other researchers who describe local chiefdoms as "segmentary," which means they were mainly loose and constantly shifting alliances. When the Spaniards arrived in the Philippines, there were already many chiefdoms—from Tondo in Manila to the sultanates in Mindanao. In Central Visayas, Magellan chose to ally himself with Humabon, a *datu* who controlled Cebu, a move that did not sit well with Lapulapu, whose territory included most of Mactan. That move was to prove fatal, with Magellan dying in a battle with Lapulapu.

Rulers commanded allegiance through personal charisma as well as from a never-ending series of alliance-building activities. Alliance-building activities included marriages, gift exchange and, as the title of Junker's book suggests, raiding, trading and feasting. Raids were especially important. They were used to extend territories, acquire booty and capture slaves and wives. Victorious raids were occasions for feasting, during which the leaders could boast of their prowess and legitimize their positions of authority. *Rajah laut* (rajah of the sea) they were called in the south, warriors whose battles were commemorated in epic tales, myths and songs.

The members of the Abu Sayyaf are descendants of these *rajah laut*, their raids bearing many similarities to the precolonial chiefs' military forays. Intoxicated by their successes, last year, the Abu Sayyaf raids are oriented toward gathering more ransom money. But more importantly, the Abu Sayyaf uses the raids to prove its members' mettle as warriors and leaders. Capturing "whites" and raiding a resort in Palawan, quite a distance from their home base, are all parts of this grand show of force.

These raids, I should emphasize, have nothing to do with Islam. In fact, Islam may have tamed the early chiefdoms several centuries ago. Even in times of war, Islam was very clear about sparing the sick, the old and the children. Islam tamed the warrior, rechanneling militarist energies into trading (we still see those networks in the many Muslim-dominated *tiangge* in the country). The Abu Sayyaf, unfortunately, represents the unreconstructed warrior, still clinging on to a tribal ethos of warfare, of endless rounds of offensives and counteroffensives.

The President is therefore playing a very dangerous game when she threatens the Abu Sayyaf with that "*isang bala* (one bullet)." I agree that the government has to be firm with these *bandidos*, but I worry, too, that the President's threats may backfire, further goading the Abu Sayyaf into a more brutal display of tribal machismo.

Will the government be able to wipe out the Abu Sayyaf? Not in the near future. The likes of the Abu Sayyaf survive because they do have support from people. That should not seem strange when you think about Philippine society. The Abu Sayyaf is a mirror to the Philippines, still a fragile and fragmented conglomeration of chiefdoms, ruled by numerous warlords who spend much of their time building up alliances. It is a primitive system, one where autocracy and ruthlessness become desirable qualities. We do not need to look to the Abu Sayyaf for proof: Miriam Defensor-Santiago garnered more than 9 million votes in her bid for reelection to the Senate. That wasn't enough for her to win, but the numbers—that's one out of every three voters—should still get you wondering about friends, relatives and neighbors.

The precolonial chiefdoms went through cycles of expansion and contraction but could never really grow into large systems. The problem with these chiefdoms—precolonial or contemporary—is that they become too expensive to maintain. They consume so much resources and yet produce so little for people since the benefits accrue mainly to the warlords. The warlords, in turn, no longer have villages to raid; instead, they concentrate on the public treasury. Facing finite resources, they have to keep subdividing provinces and cities so they can each have their own fiefdoms and cut of the public's money.

As long as our politics is built on personalities rather than issues, on allegiances to warlords rather than to the nation, we will stay mired in tribal feuds and politics-as-prestige ("*pagpapagali*," as the slang term goes). The difference between the Abu Sayyaf and our politicians, between the precolonial chiefdoms and our present polity, is, unfortunately, only a matter of degree.

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Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.org





FROILAN GALLARDO

ESPERON: "A peace advocate but will not hesitate to use force if necessary."

## New ground commander a Mindanao veteran

(From page A1)

was a matter of "tactical necessities" and "tactical adjustments."

He refused to talk about the operations of the Armed Forces in Basilan, which suffered a tremendous setback last weekend when Abu Sayyaf bandits cornered in a Lamitan hospital managed to slip away.

But if Esperon is keeping mum, others are willing to cite his qualities.

"He takes risks. But he is very deliberate in his actions," said retired Commodore Ismael Appari, a former commandant of the AFP Special Intelligence Training School where Esperon, then a lieutenant, trained.

"He is not a rush-rush kind of guy," Appari said. "He is a peace advocate, but he will not hesitate to use force when required."

### PMA graduate

Esperon is a 1974 graduate of the Philippine Military Academy.

Prior to his designation to the 103rd Brigade, he was the commander of the 602nd Brigade, which captured the Moro Islamic Liberation Front's Camp Rajah Muda at the height of last year's military campaign against the secessionist group.

He also served as chief of the AFP's Joint Operations Center in Camp Aguinaldo, which monitors the activities of and issues guidelines to all military units.

Previous to this assignment, he was chief of staff for operations of the Philippine Army at Fort Bonifacio.

An Army officer who requested anonymity described Esperon as "mild-mannered, soft-spoken, but firm in his decisions."

"He's a Mindanao veteran through and through," the source said. "What he'll bring to Basilan is his rich experience in operations and intelligence."

According to the same source, Esperon also played a significant role in hunting down then fugitive Rep. Romeo Jalosjos, who eluded authorities following his conviction for child rape.

Esperon was then deputy chief of the Presidential Security Group under President Fidel Ramos. With reports from Alexander Young and Joselle Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau



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# The WORLD



ANTI-RIOT policemen keep the peace in Katmandu after rioting erupted over the choice of a new king.

## Whodunit? Rumors fly in Nepal

KATMANDU—In private villas across this Himalayan capital, about a dozen men and women have the country's deepest secret buried in their hearts: They know who wiped out the royal family.

All attended the grand dinner Friday at which King Birendra and most of the royal family were killed, and survived the blood bath. But they have refused to go against royal protocol and talk about what happened, a senior palace official said.

The official provided the names of some guests, all high-ranking, well-known citizens. Their presence at the party, where about two dozen people were dining, has not been made public.

One of these survivors—who include four injured royal relatives who remained hospitalized Tuesday—is eventually bound to talk. Until then, conspiracy theories abound, and many

suspect the motive behind the killings had its roots in political or royal rivalry.

As the new King Gyanendra ordered an inquiry into the killings, Nepal's capital was abuzz Tuesday with rumors and conspiracy theories, exchanged in hushed tones at roadsides, in homes and in coffee shops.

"Because of the lack of credible official information, it is not surprising that people are engaging in all kinds of rumors," said sociologist Krishna Bhattachan. "It's a rumor shop out here."

The upheaval has also given Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, whose government has been tainted by a corruption scandal and is fast losing popularity, a breather. The public has been angry that Koirala hasn't done more to rid the country of Maoist rebels, who are currently active in 22 districts and

run a parallel administration in four.

The government and palace have had sharp differences over the Maoist insurgency. The government has urged sending in the Army, but the palace and Army brass have ignored the demand. The interior minister quit last year to protest this "indifference."

Military and government officials privately told journalists within hours of the killing that the late Crown Prince Dipendra had gunned down his family and then turned the weapon on himself because the queen would not allow him to marry the woman he loved.

King Gyanendra, who was enthroned Monday, hours after the crown prince died, added to the public uncertainty by blaming the killings on "a sudden burst of an automatic weapon," implying it was an accident. AP

## Fury lingers over new king

KATMANDU—Police shot and wounded at least 14 people, doctors said yesterday, and the authorities arrested 450 more for violating a curfew imposed Tuesday to prevent more protests against unpopular new King Gyanendra, who took the throne after a royal massacre.

A probe into the shooting spree in the palace on Friday failed to start as planned on Tuesday, as members of the panel quarreled over how to proceed with the investigation—a delay that could further anger Nepalese demanding an explanation of the killings.

The second curfew in as many days was lifted yesterday and there were no immediate reports of trouble. AP

## Sharon calls Arafat murderer

JERUSALEM—Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon lashed out at Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, calling him a murderer and a liar, in an interview broadcast Tuesday.

Arafat is "a murderer. He's a pathological liar," Sharon told the Russian TV channel NTV. A portion of the interview was rebroadcast on Israel's Channel Two television.

It was Sharon's strongest attack against Arafat since he took office March 7, and came as Israel weighed the effectiveness of a ceasefire Arafat called for after a Palestinian militant blew himself up in front of a Tel Aviv disco Friday night, killing himself and 20 other people, most of them Israeli teenagers.

Sharon had declared a unilateral ceasefire in eight months of fighting on May 22, but Palestinians dis-

missed it as a publicity stunt.

Though his security Cabinet approved military strikes in retaliation for the Tel Aviv bombing, Sharon held fire, to determine whether Arafat's ceasefire call would be implemented.

In the interview, however, Sharon, who has never agreed to meet Arafat, made it clear how he feels about the Palestinian leader. Complaining that Arafat is received "all around the world with a red carpet . . . like a head of state," Sharon said that instead, "he behaves as the head of terrorists and murderers."

Israel has charged that Arafat is responsible for attacks against Israel, because he released militants from prison when the current round of fighting began last September. The Palestinians say Israel is to blame, and they are defending themselves against Israeli violence. AP

## West Bank fighting cools

HEBRON, West Bank—After more than eight months, Israeli-Palestinian fighting has cooled—whether it's just a lull or a real truce remains unclear—but the damage already wrought by the violence will take years to repair.

On the Palestinian side, 484 people have been killed. On the Israeli side, 108 lost their lives. Nearly 16,000 Palestinians and hundreds of Israelis have been injured.

The fighting has shattered the Palestinian economy, and frozen growth in Israel.

It has destroyed an ambitious peace

effort and brought electoral disaster to those in Israel who championed it.

Seething over terror attacks in their cities, Israelis debate whether a truce call by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat over the weekend is genuine, and whether he can enforce it.

On the Palestinian side, contradictory statements by Islamic militants suggest a fierce debate about dropping the fight. Ominously, Hamas spiritual leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin has said his group was not beholden to the ceasefire.

Sentiment on the Palestinian street cuts both ways. AP



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# AIDS epidemic has just started, UN body warns

CAPE TOWN—The United Nations warned here Tuesday, on the 20th anniversary of the discovery of AIDS, that the epidemic had only "just started" though more than 36 million people are infected and 22 million people have died.

Peter Piot, the director of the UN agency UNAIDS, told e.t.v. independent television that in parts of the world like Asia the epidemic was still in the early stages.

"In 20 years time nearly 60 million people have become infected, which is enormous... but when I look at Asia, eastern Europe and west Africa for example, it has really just started," he said, giving the total number of infections—including the deaths—in the past 20 years.

Piot said the progress of the killer pandemic would depend on whether people had the will and the resources to combat it.

"How many people will eventually become infected will depend on ourselves entirely, whether we as the world will be able to organize ourselves and to dedicate enough resources to fight this epidemic," he said.

Piot said the "battle has been lost for some generations"—in some African villages grandparents are looking after the children, because most of the parents have died of AIDS—but that there were signs of a downturn in the infection rate in Africa.

"We see now for the first time in all continents including in Africa that particularly among the young people, also in South Africa, there is a downturn in the trend of the spread of HIV."

"It is not enough yet that is for sure and I would not call it a success but it is a hope-giving trend and it means we have to continue with what we are doing at the moment."

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## Bush prepares spiel for global warming talks

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush met with members of his Cabinet to chart a new course on global warming that focuses largely on voluntary measures to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from power plants and other sources.

There was no discussion Tuesday of mandatory measures, a senior administration official said.

When he meets with European Union leaders in Gothenburg, Sweden, on June 14-15, Bush hopes to have in hand an alternative to the 1997 Kyoto global-warming agreement that he denounced in March, the official said.

In a sign of how close Bush is to making an announcement, the lengthy White House meeting dealt mostly with how to explain and promote the alternative plan to the American public and skeptical allies, according to the official, speaking on condition of anonymity. He said Bush and his advisers were close to a consensus.

The plan probably will be based on assumptions that carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases can be reduced through improved plant equipment and preserving farm and forest areas that absorb the gases. It also could include a trading system in which one industry or company that exceeds emission standards could buy pollution "credits" from another with far less emissions.

"There's no question that the temperature of the Earth has been rising," said White House spokesperson Ari Fleischer. "The president agrees action has to be taken to fight global warming."

National security adviser Condoleezza Rice informally chaired the meeting attended by both Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney. The administration formed a Cabinet-level task force on global warming about two weeks after Bush in March reversed his campaign promise to limit carbon dioxide emissions from power plants.

Cheney is on the panel, as are the heads of several agencies, including the Energy Department, the State Department and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Some of Bush's foreign policy advisers, including Secretary of State Colin Powell, have argued for more than voluntary controls on carbon dioxide as an opening position with the Europeans, an administration official said.

The Europeans and Japan have called for mandatory controls on heat-trapping greenhouse gases that scientists say causes global warming.

"There are many issues we're considering," the official said, but the fact that "CO2 is a contributor to global warming" makes it a fairly prominent theme.

The treaty negotiated in Kyoto, Japan, calls on industrial nations to cut heat-trapping emissions to below 1990 levels by 2012. Bush sparked an international outcry when he said on March 28 that it was unworkable and discriminates against the United States.

AP

## SHLLURRP!!

TOKYO—Akimasa Matsushima is a well-educated man. He considers himself polite. And when he eats his noodles, at home or in a restaurant, he does it with a hearty SHLLURRP.

Slurping, loud and long, is what Matsushima and most Japanese over 40 were taught was the polite way to eat hot noodles and just about anything else slurp-able.

Now, it's almost a declaration of war.

"It used to be normal to make noises while eating," Matsushima, a 56-year-old lawyer, said self-consciously over dinner recently at a Tokyo noodle shop where he and a few other slurpers broke the quiet ambiance.

The battle is between generations, and genders.

Many middle-aged and older Japanese believe noodles taste better if slurped quickly while they're hot and drenched in broth. A loud slurp is also a way of showing you are enjoying the meal.

But younger Japanese are more concerned not to dribble the soup onto their silk ties and Gucci dresses. Reared on Western manners and a more Western diet, they are likely to be offended when those around them slurp.

"Slurping is for old men," said Riki Kishida, a 31-year-old accountant eating at the same restaurant as Matsushima. "Slurping has nothing to do with whether it tastes good or not."

Japan's ubiquitous noodle restaurants have yet to set up no-slurping sections. But the simmering skirmish has not been lost on Japanese social commentators and editorial writers.

Clearly siding with the older generation, an editorial on the front-page of the Asahi, a major newspaper, lamented the silence of the noodles.

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Across the **NATION**

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

**Ax falls on school officials over fees**BY NESTOR P. BURGOS  
AND CARLA P. GOMEZ  
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Education Secretary Raul Roco has warned that more heads will roll if education and school officials continue to collect contributions during enrollment in public schools.

Roco made the warning yesterday, a day after he suspended for 15 days education regional directors Victoriano Tirol of Western Visayas and Belen Magsino of Southern Tagalog for failing to enforce an order prohibiting the collection of school fees from students upon enrollment.

"I have ordered the regional directors to get the names of school principals and teachers who ignore the memo and report them to my office," Roco told radio station dyFM in Iloilo City.

"The directors are responsible for the implementation or non-implementation of the order," he said.

Roco issued DECS Order No. 22 on May 24, barring public

school officials from collecting any fees during enrollment.

New guidelines would be issued on the collection of fees for Boy and Girl Scouts and parent-teacher associations.

Roco said Tirol was ordered to answer complaints that he failed to enforce the memorandum.

Tirol, he added, should have immediately informed teachers and school officials on the order after it was issued on May 23.

Tirol said he had not received complaints that school officials collected fees during enrollment. "Maybe, Secretary Roco was misinformed," he said.

Radio stations, however, were swamped by callers who claimed that they were asked to pay miscellaneous fees last May.

Tirol said he informed school officials of the order but it was possible that schools had already collected fees when the DECS order came.

He added that he would suspend principals and school heads who ignored the memorandum. *With a report from Ma. Diosa Labiste, PDI Visayas Bureau*

**2 hurt as blast rocks Bacolod radio station**BY CARLA P. GOMEZ  
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Two passers-by were wounded when a bomb exploded in front of radio station Radyo Agong-dyHB of the Radio Mindanao Network about 1:45 a.m. yesterday.

The blast also knocked off the security guard and shattered the glass windows of a bank and an apartment building across the street.

The explosion opened about three meters of the radio station's cement fence.

It was the fourth bomb explosion in Bacolod this year. The first was in February at the Bacolod police station.

Injured in yesterday's explosion were Vic Rio, 50, an instructor at the University of Negros Occidental Recoletos, and Jeffrey Isidro, 27, a merchandiser.

The two had just passed by the radio station when the bomb exploded. Rio suffered minor wounds in the back, legs and arms.

Isidro, who suffered wounds in the back, managed to run to the Bacolod Police Station 2, two blocks away from the radio station, to seek help.

Raffy Zarraga, the radio station's guard, fainted on impact of the blast.

Supt. Amado Marquez, Bacolod police chief, has relieved SPO4 George Santander as Police Station 2 chief for failing to secure his area.

Police bomb expert Denny Montoya said the bomb used was a composition B military explosive, the same type used during the blast at the Bacolod Bays Center on May 21 and in front of the residence of a businessman on June 1.

Montoya said the bomb was wrapped in a blue plastic bag that was placed between a tree and the cement wall of the Radyo Agong

fence, he said.

He said the one responsible for the bombings could have had some military or police training.

Marquez said they were looking into the possibility that active policemen were involved in the bombing because military explosives were not easily available to non-police or military personnel.

But, he added, it appeared that the suspects had no intention of harming anyone but only wanted to send a message.

"The message could have been for Radyo Agong or simply to embarrass the police," he said.

Marquez, however, ruled out the theory that the bombing had anything to do with the Moro extremist group. Abu Sayyaf, saying such a possibility was remote.

Vic Mercado, Radyo Agong station manager in Bacolod, said the company was looking into the pos-

sibility that the bombing could be related to the network's coverage of the military pursuit of the Abu Sayyaf.

He said they had been hooking up with their Zamboanga sister station that had been interviewing bandit leaders like Abu Sabaya.

On Monday, Mercado said Ray Bayuging, station manager of RMN Zamboanga, had an argument with national security adviser Roilo Golez on the networks' manner of covering the military pursuit of the Abu Sayyaf.

The police have been on heightened alert to preempt any diversionary tactics by the Abu Sayyaf in other parts of the country.

Salvador Ferrer, Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster-Negros Occidental chapter chair, called for tightened security in media outlets here.

He also reminded journalists to take extra security measures in the light of the Radyo Agong bombing. Ferrer challenged those responsible for the bombing to admit the attack and explain the motive for it.

**A powerful car at a powerful financing plan****ECC extension takes Agno folk by surprise**BY YOLANDA FUERTES  
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

AGNO, Pangasinan—Residents and environmental groups here and in nearby Bani town were dumbfounded after learning that the environmental clearance certificate (ECC) of the proposed Agno cement and quarry project had been extended for another two years.

The residents had claimed victory in their fight against the cement plant complex after its ECC expired on March 29 this year.

But the residents said the ECC's "unilateral extension" by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources was a "big blow to the long and arduous opposition" of Agno and Bani residents who fought the project for more than three years.

In their letter to Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez, the Agno Concerned Citizens for Ecologically Secure and Sustainable Development (Access), through the environmental law office Tunggol Kalikasan, said the extension was "granted without any public notice or consultation although Goldsun Cement Corp. failed to comply with the conditions of the ECC."

In his letter to former Environment Secretary Antonio Cerilles, Winking Lee, president of the Goldsun Cement Corp. that proposed the project, said "despite the more than usual number of ECC provisions, we have secured locational clearances, archaeological clearance and a permit to develop a private non-commercial port."

"However, there are clearances that need to be secured otherwise the project's construction phase and timetable will be substantially altered," Lee said.

He said they had "poured in substantial efforts and resources" to the Agno cement and quarry project amounting to \$300 million.

Former acting Environment Secretary Joemari Gerochi, who succeeded Cerilles, wrote Lee and said that after a site inspection by the regional Environmental Management Bureau, "your request (for the ECC's extension) was found to be meritorious."

But residents opposing the project described the extension as "a midnight decision," claiming Gerochi signed it days before he left office.

One of the ECC provisions is that it would be revoked if the project has not started two years after its issuance on March 29, 1999, and pending the strong opposition of residents and people's organizations in Agno and Bani.

Gerochi signed the extension on March 30, or a day after the ECC was automatically revoked.

Access said the cement plant's proponents could not expect cooperation from affected residents despite the two-year extension of the ECC.

"Those against the project were very angry because they thought the battle against an ecologically destructive project has been won. We will continue to fight until we achieve victory," said Lydia Colobong, Access vice president.

"How can you extend an (ECC) that has already lapsed?" asked former Executive Secretary Jacobo Clave, a native of Bani and among those opposing the project.

Two weeks before the two-year-old ECC expired, Access appealed to Gerochi, through Tunggol Kalikasan, to deny any attempt to extend the ECC.

The group, however, learned of the ECC's extension early April and immediately tried to confirm the information from Gerochi's office.

Colobong said they received a copy of the extension order only on May 8 from EMB Director Peter Abaya.

"It looked like the extension was concealed from us because the order cannot be found in the DENR's computer tracing center where all communications of the department pass through. Even the regional office refused to give us a copy," she said.

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**MERCY MISSION**

A police officer takes part in a medical mission in Mexico, Pampanga, organized by personnel and executives of The Lakeshore and the Rotary Club of Pampanga recently.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LAKESHORE



# Nur term as ARMM gov to be extended

DIGOS CITY—Nur Misuari's term as governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao is likely to be extended anew after the Senate, on third reading on Tuesday, approved a bill which aims to reschedule the plebiscite in the region from June 30 to Aug. 15.

The Commission on Elections earlier said it could not hold a plebiscite on the proposed expansion of the geographical coverage of the ARMM for lack of time to prepare for the exercise.

Malacañang even came out with a letter certifying the need for the quick passage of Senate Bill 2282.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel yesterday said the Senate found the request made by the Comelec valid, taking into consideration the conduct of the May 14 senatorial and local elections.

"We really have no choice but to pass it. The Comelec cannot do the job of conducting the plebiscite on June 30 as scheduled," Pimentel said.

Aside from resetting the plebiscite, the bill as approved, also moved the election of new ARMM officials, including members of the ARMM legislative assembly, from Sept. 10 to Nov. 26.

This would be the third time that Misuari's term of office would be extended.

The expansion of the coverage of the ARMM is included in the September 1996 peace agreement signed by the government and the Moro National Liberation Front, which Misuari chairs.

Currently, there are only four provinces under the ARMM. These are Maguindanao, Sulu, Lanao del Sur and Tawi-tawi.

The MNLF had threatened to resort to rebellion again should the government fail to expand the autonomous region.

A preview of an expanded autonomous region

would have been the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development, a body that would oversee the development of Muslim and non-Muslim areas in Mindanao.

The SPCPD, created during the term of former President Fidel Ramos, was also placed under the leadership of Misuari.

But several provinces and cities in Mindanao expressed strong opposition to the council, expressing fears that it would lead to a virtual Islamic state in the region.

The MNLF also expressed dissatisfaction over the implementation of the 1996 peace pact, saying although the SPCPD was formed as a gesture of trust in the MNLF, it did not have enough power and money to implement its projects.

But Misuari also came under criticism for his alleged failure to improve the lives of his constituents as governor of the ARMM.

One of the criticisms against Misuari was over his frequent trips abroad, which the governor said were necessary as he was trying to attract foreign investments into the region.

The agreement also called for the integration into either the police or the Armed Forces of the Philippines of former guerrillas of the MNLF.

Some MNLF fighters, however, resorted to abductions to protest the alleged failure of the government to efficiently enforce the peace agreement and their failure to find jobs and livelihood after the agreement was signed.

Several international agencies, including those under the United Nations, have been helping the former guerrillas find new livelihoods after the peace agreement was signed. Allan A. Naval, PDI Mindanao Bureau

## Coal plant proponents assail 'disinformation' campaign

THE PRESIDENT of the Central Negros Power Corp. (CNPC) yesterday assailed what it called a disinformation campaign being waged by Greenpeace and other lobby groups, including losers in the recent elections, against its power plant project.

In a statement, the CNPC also urged Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez to withdraw an order recalling the Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) issued to a 50-MW clean coal power plant to be operated by the company in Pulupandan, Negros Occidental.

In a letter to Alvarez, CNPC president Facundo Yeneza Jr. said the basis of such a recall is unclear even as he admitted that the ECC could be subjected by the DENR to another review.

Yeneza also said the ECC was "hard-earned" adding that work for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the firm started in 1997 with the ECC issued in December 2000 or three years later.

The CNPC president decried the disinformation campaign being waged by Greenpeace, saying the project "will not cut a single tree" while another power generation project being backed by the environmentalists would "require clearing 1,000 hectares of virgin forests."

"In fact, the proponents of the geothermal power project have been trying to obtain congressional approval to enter the pristine Mt. Kanlaon protected area without success. And yet, the supposed environmentalists have been mysteriously quiet on this," Yeneza said in the statement, sent in answer to a previous INQUIRER story on protests against the proposed coal plant.

Yeneza said the CNPC will be undertaking a massive tree planting program jointly with the local government of Pulupandan under a memorandum of agreement which will implement a 10-year, 100-hectare tree planting effort aimed at planting more than a million trees.

In addition, Yeneza informed Alvarez that the CNPC has initiated a mangrove-planting project as early as last year. "Today, we have participated in planting 50,000 *bakha* mangrove seedlings already," he added.

Yeneza said the CNPC followed the rules of the

DENR, which conducted public hearings in Pulupandan, to take note of the concerns raised by the people there. The CNPC and DENR addressed all these concerns, Yeneza said.

The CNPC president said the project originally started as a \$45-million diesel-fuel power plant that was upgraded to a \$100-million "clean coal" power project using the latest circulating fluidized bed (CFB) technology which surpasses environmental emission standards.

Yeneza said contrary to the allegations of Greenpeace and other project detractors, the acceptability of the project passed the review committee of the DENR, which in turn, endorsed the project to the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) in November 2000 after public hearings were held in May of the same year.

Thus, "it is grossly unfair and untrue (to say) that the ECC of the CNPC project was rushed," Yeneza said. The facts and documents on the project "disprove all the misleading allegations of Greenpeace and other lobbyists against the project."

### WEATHER FORECAST

**FORECAST:** Southern Luzon and Visayas will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

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|  Clark Zone<br>HI 33° Lo 24°   |  Tagaytay<br>HI 32° Lo 22°  |  Legazpi<br>HI 32° Lo 25°        |  Calapan<br>HI 32° Lo 24°  |
|  Bacolod<br>HI 32° Lo 24°      |  Roxas<br>HI 32° Lo 26°     |  Cebu<br>HI 31° Lo 25°           |  Tacloban<br>HI 32° Lo 25° |
|  Gen. Santos<br>HI 32° Lo 24°  |  Zamboanga<br>HI 31° Lo 24° |  Cagayan de Oro<br>HI 34° Lo 23° |  Davao<br>HI 33° Lo 25°    |

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Winning Number Combination  
(Grand Draw: May 28, 2001)

| (5) ALCATEL<br>TALK & TEXT | (5) MITSUBISHI<br>TRIUM | (5) MOTOROLA<br>T-2288 | (5) NOKIA 5110 | (5) PANASONIC<br>GD-30 | (5) NOKIA 3210 |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------|------------------------|----------------|
| 551633                     | 518718                  | 122337                 | 136689         | 136277                 | 211515         |
| 119047                     | 211642                  | 986636                 | 173905         | 491747                 | 941759         |
| 104434                     | 458559                  | 918421                 | 931317         | 544257                 | 565403         |
| 937712                     | 691732                  | 487272                 | 416906         | 247797                 | 975897         |
| 774979                     | 140197                  | 755363                 | 137581         | 948154                 | 718814         |

### (100) Photographer's Camera Bag

|        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 950371 | 126802 | 315481 | 629742 | 349679 | 748805 | 569370 | 214653 | 228704 |
| 963247 | 848152 | 134822 | 976158 | 693577 | 981647 | 765490 | 806346 | 489015 |
| 895400 | 488451 | 761195 | 673082 | 325789 | 748159 | 943646 | 647624 | 801035 |
| 978516 | 539724 | 386071 | 783411 | 444419 | 475152 | 805789 | 950658 | 199060 |
| 399111 | 917323 | 140410 | 208853 | 193652 | 328907 | 842028 | 603746 | 825492 |
| 570554 | 705899 | 632879 | 685008 | 850432 | 438044 | 763057 | 510737 | 468045 |
| 257374 | 497713 | 983782 | 441523 | 665500 | 131816 | 815081 | 702484 | 439171 |
| 871730 | 825846 | 266553 | 838996 | 267799 | 421704 | 522039 | 311916 | 129772 |
| 254290 | 121566 | 348978 | 490304 | 751974 | 494428 | 443637 | 325544 | 115828 |
| 760219 | 239323 | 631384 | 382519 | 845510 | 642015 | 563970 | 727632 | 719436 |
| 823572 | 379403 | 512984 | 373876 | 983113 | 468253 | 241155 | 501574 | 863094 |
| 429651 |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |

### (100) Photographer's Vest

|        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 133695 | 968732 | 458610 | 934621 | 843182 | 753106 | 321103 | 502146 | 982013 |
| 147851 | 986532 | 678302 | 145981 | 867543 | 602068 | 273404 | 880405 | 343196 |
| 761649 | 624971 | 657496 | 718282 | 504802 | 415955 | 518730 | 801547 | 524806 |
| 539977 | 271381 | 159504 | 220932 | 889287 | 749226 | 475624 | 613457 | 369071 |
| 570905 | 124790 | 527372 | 651592 | 465155 | 141442 | 936684 | 614938 | 345326 |
| 722090 | 813671 | 558343 | 712325 | 995929 | 427033 | 278271 | 689767 | 855492 |
| 448728 | 743532 | 550044 | 438215 | 976532 | 802312 | 478653 | 543016 | 655032 |
| 989502 | 100945 | 385632 | 951102 | 962034 | 540213 | 103110 | 986521 | 573201 |
| 116479 | 388632 | 536132 | 738145 | 923516 | 678432 | 123454 | 589743 | 998658 |
| 665716 | 831722 | 909372 | 577864 | 690431 | 940320 | 635954 | 328703 | 579102 |
| 682013 | 911030 | 192483 | 211403 | 915761 | 874111 | 586219 | 187303 | 895617 |
| 100218 |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |

### (100) Solid Gold T-Shirt w/ collar

|        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 337054 | 408036 | 456031 | 912592 | 574724 | 107432 | 187366 | 760663 | 759188 |
| 986742 | 723696 | 644005 | 245203 | 745637 | 287473 | 619210 | 339273 | 586881 |
| 170891 | 181901 | 208341 | 275057 | 975572 | 461139 | 869651 | 109669 | 960666 |
| 527131 | 211706 | 232931 | 342384 | 213784 | 842036 | 891531 | 629532 | 729977 |
| 513390 | 561986 | 559663 | 965697 | 585644 | 735243 | 685420 | 635018 | 882116 |
| 156245 | 579378 | 751453 | 784633 | 707764 | 247291 | 491209 | 109092 | 471273 |
| 937507 | 471421 | 725906 | 220632 | 622261 | 850693 | 807871 | 524321 | 577191 |
| 398842 | 965171 | 889640 | 752235 | 414262 | 891735 | 236600 | 769287 | 461962 |
| 836514 | 425701 | 856800 | 873247 | 674242 | 222704 | 933858 | 247815 | 682819 |
| 694615 | 913567 | 358243 | 200973 | 583671 | 935155 | 110571 | 876941 | 951101 |
| 528812 | 132767 | 951032 | 181003 | 918801 | 156610 | 988643 | 431106 | 971366 |
| 181905 |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |

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# Abus moving deep into Basilan jungle

(From page A1)

said that his men had beheaded three soldiers and that American hostage Martin Burnham was wounded during a clash three days ago.

The Associated Press quoted Sabaya as saying that the rest of the exhausted hostages were safe.

Lapinid admitted that he had received reports saying that one of the hostages had been hit by shrapnel. But he said the reports were still unconfirmed.

Sabaya also claimed that negotiations with a government emissary had begun with his demand that the troops pursuing the Abu Sayyaf be withdrawn.

"If they wanted to seriously talk to us, they should show it by removing the military," he told RMN, apparently speaking by satellite telephone. "While the soldiers are here, there will be no talking."

It was the first time Sabaya was heard from since Saturday night, when the bandits fled a hospital they occupied for a day in Lamitan.

The bandits' escape despite a supposed military cordon was the apparent reason for Narcise's replacement as ground commander of government forces in Basilan.

## MILF, MNLF

In an interview aired yesterday over a radio station in Digos City, Basilan Gov. Wahab Akbar said it was "very possible" that Moro Islamic Liberation Front guerrillas and even Moro National Liberation Front members were helping the Abu Sayyaf fight government troops in his province.

Akbar pointed out that some MILF guerrillas had relatives in the Abu Sayyaf, and that in times of crisis such as this, "blood is thicker than water."

But in Manila, Eduardo Ermita, President Macapagal-Arroyo's adviser on the peace process, said there was no reason to doubt the sincerity of the MILF, especially with peace talks scheduled to resume this month.

"We should keep a degree of confidence in them while we are talking," Ermita said, adding:

"They even disowned the kidnap-

ping activities of the Abu Sayyaf, so we're not doubting their sincerity in the peace talks."

The MILF had earlier denied it was giving aid and comfort to the bandit group, whose activities, it said, were condemnable and contrary to the principles of Islam and the teachings of the Koran.

But MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu did not discount the possibility that its guerrillas clashed with government troops that had wandered into rebel territory.

The MILF has a brigade in Basilan, Kabalu said.

AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan had also raised suspicions that MILF rebels in Basilan were supporting the bandits against government troops dispatched to rescue the hostages seized from the Dos Palmas resort in Palawan on May 27.

Akbar also said the fear of reprisal from the Abu Sayyaf had forced some civilians to refuse to cooperate with the government.

"The people of Basilan know how dangerous it is for them to go against any armed group, especially the Abu Sayyaf," he said.

He said some residents were "even idolizing" the bandit group, and noted that this must be the reason it had managed to recruit boys as young as 15.

Akbar, however, said the majority of the people of Basilan despised the group, to the extent that some residents wanted to directly participate in the military operations.

## Stress

Sabaya told RMN that the estimated 20 hostages were tired and suffering from stress because they had been at the front line of fighting with government forces.

But they were largely unharmed, he said.

He claimed, however, that Martin Burnham—one of three Americans the group is holding—suffered "several gunshot wounds in the back" from soldiers' gunfire as the Abu Sayyaf was retreating.

He was evasive when pressed by

RMN for details.

Sabaya said that the hostages would not be harmed, and that they were being treated well.

"They wanted to drink Coke, so we went into town and gave them Coke. If we had wanted to kill all of them, we could've easily killed them all," he said.

He also claimed that his men had captured 13 soldiers, beheaded three who fought back, and freed the rest.

The bandits are holding nine of the hostages taken from Dos Palmas and others taken from the Lamitan hospital.

The bodies of two Filipinos, both resort workers, were found Sunday, days after they had been hacked to death. One was beheaded.

Sabaya said he spoke to the government emissary over the weekend, but added that negotiations for the release of the hostages would not continue unless the military ceased its operations.

He insisted that he and his men would not give up.

"The government wants our unconditional surrender. What are they, crazy? If you think you can follow us into the mountains and finish us off, you're wrong," he said, adding that his group was not "like a candle that you can extinguish with one blow."

Sabaya also said his group was able to escape last Saturday because the hospital was not completely surrounded by troops, as the military had claimed.

"When we left the hospital, there was no military cordon. If there had been one, we wouldn't have escaped," he said.

Earlier, military officials said the bandits had been surrounded but were able to slip away under cover of darkness. They said soldiers were unable to immediately locate the bandits because of dense vegetation and low visibility.

Sabaya scoffed at the military's claims, saying the soldiers "were just afraid to follow us."

He warned the President "not to take it easy," adding that his group had eluded two other presidents who also swore to wipe it out.

"This isn't the movies. Let's not talk about threats. We are prepared to die

and not surrender. One West Point graduate promised to wipe us out. Well, he didn't," Sabaya said, referring to former President Fidel Ramos.

## Vigilantes

At least two self-styled leaders of a vigilante group claiming to belong to the Ilaga said they had prepared their followers to help in the Basilan crisis.

Speaking over a simulcast broadcast in Southern Mindanao, the Ilaga leaders who identified themselves only as Kumander Thompson and Kumander Texas said they had a total of 6,000 followers mostly based in South Cotabato who were willing to augment the government troops fighting the Abu Sayyaf in Western Mindanao.

Thompson said his followers were well equipped and veterans in combat.

He said his group was not after the bounty offered by the Macapagal administration for the capture of Abu Sayyaf leaders and members.

"We want to put an end to this terrorism, for the benefit of everybody, whether Christian or Muslim," he said.

But Texas admitted it would be hard for the Ilaga to go to Basilan because even military commanders were discouraging them from doing so.

"They told us that we will only complicate things there, which to us is very unkind," he said.

But Human Rights Commissioner Nasser Marohomsalie warned that using vigilantes in the war against the Abu Sayyaf could be cause for widespread rights abuse.

## Government aid

The Department of Social Welfare and Development has sent teams of social workers to Dos Palmas in Palawan and to the Southern headquarters in Zamboanga City to conduct stress debriefing sessions with the resort employees, the rescued hostages and their next of kin.

A DSWD news release quoted Social Welfare Secretary Curazon Juliano-Soliman as saying that the sessions were intended to help the ex-hostages and their families cope with their traumatic experience.

Parisha Taradji, director of the DSWD Field Office in Western Mindanao, said in a report to Soliman that an operation center had been set up in Isabela, Basilan, to assist residents displaced by the fighting.

According to Taradji, P531,478 worth of food packages, blankets, mats and other basic items had been given to a total of 701 families.

The Association of Barangay Captains under its president Sammy Lopez is providing temporary shelter to 110 families at Barangay Maganda, Lamitan. The rest of the evacuees are staying with friends and relatives.

The National Food Authority yester-

day allocated 9,000 bags of rice for the displaced families in Basilan.

The agency will also provide other food items such as sugar, coffee, noodles and sardines to help the DSWD in its relief activities, NFA Administrator Tony Abad said.

The NFA field office in Basilan has a rice inventory of 7,000 bags, with 5,000 more bags expected to arrive within the week.

By the NFA's estimate, 432,000 kilos (or 8,640 bags) of rice will be needed in a month to support the allocated two kilos of rice per week for each displaced family. *With reports from Carlito Pablo, Cynthia D. Balana, AP*

## P5M for retired colonel

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo will hand a P5-million reward today to a military officer who killed an Abu Sayyaf leader on June 2.

Retired Col. Fernando Bajeh, a former executive officer of the 103rd Brigade, will receive the reward for killing Yusup Ladjal in a firefight in Lamitan, Basilan.

The reward is part of a P100-million bounty put up by the government for those providing information that can lead to the capture or death of Abu Sayyaf leaders and members.

The government promised P5 million for each bandit leader, and P1 million for each member. *Martin P. Marfil*

## Palace: Martial law 'not necessary' for now

(From page A1)

He was reacting to National Security Adviser Roilo Golez's statement in a radio interview that the Palace had turned its back on the idea of imposing a state of emergency or martial law to get rid of the Abu Sayyaf once and for all.

"That's his assessment right now," Tiglao said, adding that Ms Macapagal and her advisers were still studying the need for and the implications of such a political move.

Tiglao said Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes was studying the options, "but there's no push right now or demand from the military for the President to impose a state of emergency or martial law."

Golez said martial law was a "very extreme" measure "that is not yet on the agenda of Malacañang."

He added: "Many believe that that is not necessary and that the government can respond to the Abu Sayyaf problem without declaring martial law or a state of emergency."

Indeed, militant groups raised fears that declaring martial law would worsen the insurgency problem in Mindanao rather than solve it.

The leftist party-list group Sanlakas described military or emergency rule as "a cure worse than the disease it purports to solve."

## Hammer to kill wasp

The Kilusang Mayo Uno, on the other hand, said that placing Basilan under martial law to exterminate the Abu Sayyaf would be like "using a sledgehammer to get rid of a wasp."

"A social problem like the Abu Sayyaf will not be solved by military means," Sanlakas president Wilson Fortaleza said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo "is giving the Abu Sayyaf too much importance and over-estimating their abilities. The AFP and the PNP are already hot on the trail of the Abu Sayyaf, and that's more than enough," said a KMU spokesperson.

## Cha-cha proposal

In a press briefing, Sen. Franklin Drilon said he would push for constitutional amendments to ease restrictions on the imposition of emergency measures to deal with security problems.

But other senators, including Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr., are against his proposal, warning that the government could abuse its extra powers.

In a press briefing, Drilon noted that although emergency powers were contained in the 1987 Constitution, the

President can hardly ever use them due to many restrictions.

"Apparently, there are so many restrictions under the present Constitution. It would appear that it takes a lot of effort before extraordinary measures can be undertaken in response to the situation in Mindanao," Drilon told Senate reporters.

But Pimentel said the safeguards against possible abuse of the emergency powers should be retained.

"That was done on purpose and for a very good reason—because of the blatant abuses against human rights during the Marcos martial law years, and we cannot allow that to happen again," said Pimentel.

"I am for amending certain aspects of the Constitution, but not to (make it easier for) the President to impose martial law," he said.

## Zambo mayor worried

In Zamboanga City, Mayor Maria Clara Lobregat convened the Regional Peace and Order Council to discuss means to prevent the conflict in Basilan from spilling over into her city.

Lobregat, who is against the martial-law proposal, said she met with officials from the Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces to assess the threat of the Abu Sayyaf to the safety of Zamboanga.

Lobregat expressed concern that the bandits may disguise themselves as refugees and escape to the city.

"The people of Basilan are coming to Zamboanga for a safer place," she said, hinting that sympathizers of the kidnappers might be among them.

"Hopefully, what happened in Lamitan won't happen in Zamboanga. I don't think Zamboanga should be put under a state of emergency," she said.

## Anti-child abuse

The militant groups also expressed apprehension that the declaration of martial rule could lead to human rights violations.

The Commission on Human Rights said the military could already be violating the anti-child abuse law if reports were true that Marines were using classrooms at a local elementary school in Basilan as headquarters.

Nasser Marohomsalie, CHR commissioner in charge for Mindanao, wrote yesterday to Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes in reaction to reports that the opening of classes at the Lamitan Elementary School had been postponed because of the supposed use of classrooms as temporary Marine headquarters.

The law prohibits the use of public infrastructure for military purposes. *With a report from PDI Mindanao Bureau*

## Still no sign of missing US sailor

(From page A1)

soon and unharmed.

"The likelihood is he was lost. It's a big expense of land around Mt. Pinatubo. Maybe he was lost," presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said hopefully at a press briefing.

Quigley told reporters that "we have no reason to suspect that he was taken prisoner," but added that the possibility had not been ruled out.

In Angeles City, the head of local police, Chief Supt. Enrique Galang, said: "We cannot discount the possibility that there was an armed group that picked him up."

Still, the joint war games were proceeding as scheduled despite the incident, Elmer Cato, spokesperson of the Presidential Commission on the Visiting Forces Agreement, told reporters yesterday.

## Washing slippers

Washburn was washing his rubber slippers in a creek behind the rest of the group when some 100 armed men, identifying themselves as New People's Army rebels, fired at them on Tuesday, according to officials.

The group of five Americans, escorted by four Filipino naval staff and at least one local guide, was returning from a mountain hike during a break from an ongoing joint military exercise when it was attacked around 4 km from the Clark Special Economic Zone in Pampanga.

The Americans wore civilian clothes and were not armed. The rebels apparently mistook the Philippine Navy men for policemen, and the foreigners for tourists, officials said.

The attackers reportedly said they only wanted the Filipinos' firearms—two M-16 rifles and .45 caliber pistols.

## Only after weapons

"It was the weapons they were after... It would have been a different story had the attackers known they were from the US military," Cato said.

"If there was an intent to hold any Americans, all of them would have been seized," said Maj. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia, commanding general of the Northern Luzon Command.

When the assailants left after about an hour and the soldiers realized that Washburn was missing but failed to find him, the servicemen trekked back to Clark.

"It was a simple case of *agaw-arnas* (weapon snatching)," Air Force Maj. Allan Ballesteros told reporters in Angeles.

Cato said Washburn might have run off when he heard the gunfire and was hiding to make sure he did not fall into rebel hands.

"There were no bloodstains in the area, so we believe he was unharmed in the attack," Cato said.

One of the Filipinos, SNI Ruben Bautista, was hit by shrapnel in the chest but is out of danger, according to Ballesteros.

## Experienced trekker

A guide discovered Washburn's rubber flip-flops near the site where he was last seen. He may be roaming barefoot in the mountains, officials said.

His escorts said they believed he still had his backpack and had either hidden during the night or walked toward Subic town in Zambales, west of Clark.

"He seemed to be an experienced trekker," Cato said of Washburn.

Navy spokesman Lt. Cmdr. Jeff Davis in Washington said the missing American was from Celina, Ohio. A 15-year Navy veteran, he was commissioned as an officer in 1998 and has been in the Philippines five times, officials said.

Provincial police received a report yesterday afternoon that the American had been sighted by residents of San Marcelino town in Zambales, but it proved to be false.

## Salaguinto group

The "rebels" had attacked from a

hill, surrounding Washburn's group.

Some of the attackers wore ski masks and were heavily armed with AK-47s, M-16s and grenade launchers. Cato said.

Six of the assailants, including a man who identified himself as an NPA commander and spoke in Kapampangan and Ilocano, approached the group and ordered the Filipino soldiers to hand over their firearms.

"*Kailangan lang namin ang baril ninyo kung hindi magkakamatawan dito. Unahin namin ang puti* (We just need your guns. Don't fight or else you will be killed. We will kill the Americans first)," Ballesteros quoted the NPA leader as saying, based on the account of PO2 Mario Padilla, one of the escorts.

But residents said they suspected that the armed men were not NPA guerrillas but members of the Salaguinto group, an armed band believed to be engaged in the business of selling fake gold bars manufactured in Clark's hinterlands.

Garcia, the regional commander, also expressed doubts that the attackers were really communist rebels, remarking there were many criminal gangs operating in that area.

The NPA's Josepino Corpus Command, based in Central Luzon, has not yet owned up to the attack. Sources in the communist movement also said it was unusual for NPA rebels in Pampanga to operate in such a large band.

## Search

Two search helicopters combed an area of about 10 square km yesterday, officials said.

Aetas in Sapang Bato's Target village, near the search zone, helped the government troops scour the area.

The Aetas are familiar with the terrain and used to teach jungle survival courses to US troops, according to Pan Fred, a tribal leader.

cinets that actually functioned and the main sources of the votes. Nobody knows how many actually cast such votes," she said.

Tancangco noted that even in the Comelec's own senatorial canvass report on June 1, Noli de Castro already had 15,467,135 votes when the actual number of voters who actually voted as written in the report was only 11,663,648.

It was learned that this was due to the incomplete data on the certificates of canvass (COCs) such as the number of voters who actually voted.

A footnote in the report revealed that the number of voters who actually voted was not reflected in the COCs of 12 cities, nine municipalities and 22 provinces.

Tancangco said that despite this, there was no determined effort by the NBC headed by Benipayo to complete the data on the number of those who actually voted.

Benipayo turned the tables on Tancangco, saying she and the commissioners identified with her did not attend the en banc session when Resolution 4343 was deliberated on and approved by the majority in the en banc.

"We called the meeting to promulgate that but, as usual, they did not ap-

pear," Benipayo said. "We still had to publish those rules and we have enough votes."

Benipayo accused Tancangco, Sadain and Javier of "trying to muddle and confuse the issue."

The infighting in the Comelec comes as lawyers from the People Power Coalition and Puwersa ng Masa gear up for a showdown in today's canvassing.

The province that will determine the 13th placer in the senatorial election has an unusually high voters' turnout, raising speculations that the election there was marred by "dagdag-bawas (vote padding and shaving)."

The 13th placer will serve only three years and the rest of the senators-elect, six years.

## 96-percent turnout

Lanao del Sur, one of four provinces in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, has 294,730 registered voters, some 285,000 of whom actually voted on May 14 for a turnout of 96 percent. The national turnout was 85 percent.

Tancangco said the unusually high voters' turnout in the province was an indication of vote padding.

"That's a possibility that this could have been influenced by dagdag-bawas

operations," Tancangco said.

But Borra said the high voters' turnout was "normal" in Lanao del Sur.

Asked if the votes in the province were padded, Benipayo said, "No. Even if the turnout is 100 percent, you cannot say that there was padding."

As of the latest official count, which became the basis for the proclamation, Ralph Recto was in 12th place with 10,387,108 votes and Gregorio Honasan in 13th place with 10,363,272, a difference of only 22,836 votes.

Even Loi Ejercito, who is in 11th place with 10,456,674 votes, is not yet assured of a six-year term since she leads Recto only by 69,566 votes and Honasan by 94,402.

Recto's lawyer Romulo Macalintal boldly predicted yesterday that his client would win over Honasan in Lanao del Sur by at least 20,000 votes.

But former Immigration Commissioner Rufus Rodriguez, counsel for Ejercito, said he expected to discover more vote padding for Recto in today's canvassing.

Rodriguez had earlier succeeded in having 93,000 votes deducted from Recto after the NBC found proof that these were padded.

On Tuesday, he filed a petition questioning 114,027 votes for Recto

in 11 towns in Maguindanao and Lanao del Norte.

Municipal COCs from Lanao del Sur arrived in two batches at the Comelec main office at past noon yesterday under heavy guard by the Marines and watchers of political parties.

The NBC over the weekend ordered the transfer of the provincial canvass to Manila because of rising political tension in Lanao del Sur, which delayed the canvassing there for more than two weeks.

Benipayo said the provincial canvassing for Lanao del Sur would start at 10 p.m. today, after which the NBC would resume session to canvass the COC.

The NBC has canvassed 101 out of the 102 COCs since May 17. Rodriguez said he would actively take part even in the provincial canvass of Lanao del Sur amid fears raised by the PnM that the COCs in the provinces had been tampered with to prop up Recto in the 12th position.

"We will watch the proceedings closely because the Lanao del Sur votes will be decisive," Rodriguez said. "If they said they won by 20,000 votes there that's a relief because at least the padding was not that much." *With a report from Lorraine Rajols*

## Tancangco admits she's weird

(From page A1)

for my principles" in the Commission on Elections.

Tancangco was reacting to Commissioner Rex Borra's statement "I can't fathom the weirdness of her mind."

Borra made the statement after Tancangco did not sign Resolution 01-005 of the National Board of Canvassers. The resolution paved the way for the proclamation of the winners of the senatorial race on Wednesday.

Borra issued another one-liner against Tancangco: "She's being true to form by being cantankerous."

Tancangco defended herself in a press conference at the Traders' Royal Hotel where she resumed her word war with Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo. The election campaign and the May 14 elections muted the word war.

Tancangco said she wished Benipayo "would have thought in a more balanced way" the proclamation of winners.

She accused Benipayo of railroad-ing the passing of resolutions in the poll body.

"Even before there could be discussions in the en banc the three of them had already come up with their own decision," Tancangco said, referring to Benipayo, Borra and Commissioner



# 'I'm a soldier, I must comply first before I complain...'

(From page A1)

for his mother, a fighting cock for his father and *durian* for his friends.

Yesterday, President Macapagal-Arroyo went to Bulong's wake at the family residence in Bagong Nayan, Antipolo. Outside the house was a sign that read: "Welcome home our hero Gene Kenneth."

Ms Macapagal gave his family P100,000 in addition to his military benefits. And because Bulong was the sole breadwinner, she assured his family that his eldest sister, Bernadette, who is a physical therapist, would get a job at the Presidential Security Group.

## Basilan assignment

In his journal, Bulong candidly admitted that he had "a feeling of annoyance" when he learned that he was being deployed to Basilan.

He was then assigned in Jolo and was "enjoying" himself in the beach in Igasan, Patikul, Sulu, when the order for the Basilan assignment came.

"I don't know the place. What kind of people live there? What's the culture of the people?" he asked.

But since he was a professional soldier, he said he accepted the task: "I'm a soldier and must be flexible in any situation."

When he reached Basilan, Bulong said he felt privileged "because not all are given an opportunity to be assigned here."

"The feeling of anguish... when I knew I was about to be reassigned to a new place vanished," Bulong said.

He said he immediately established rapport with his comrades who came from different detachments and he vowed to "lead by example."

## Entering PMA

Bulong finished one year of electronics engineering at the St. Louis University in Baguio City. He decided to enter the PMA to help send his sisters Bernadette, 23, and Anthonette, 21, to college.

His mother, Carmelita, said her son sent them his allowance at the PMA for his sisters' education expenses.

"He never dreamed of becoming a soldier," she said.

"Whenever his uncles, who are also soldiers, would encourage him to enter the PMA, he would say that there were enough soldiers in the family," Carmelita said.

She said her son wanted to become a priest when he was younger and would tag along with her on daily trips to the parish church, where she is an active member.

But Bulong's father, Patrocinio, said his son had quickly grown to love the calling to serve the country after he entered the elite military school.

Patrocinio had served with the presidential security command during the time of former President Ferdinand Marcos.

## Owned by gov't

Patrocinio said the family tried to get Bulong out of the PMA when the latter suffered leg injuries for an unexplained reason. But the boy would not budge and insisted that he would finish what he had started.

Bulong had told his father that they did not own him anymore, and that he was already "owned by the government."

Bulong was scheduled to fly in from Basilan later this month to attend a wedding of his PMA mistah (classmate) in Baguio City on June 28. He was also supposed to be part of the wedding entourage of another friend on July 28.

"As a father, I choke at the thought of my dead son, thinking things could have been different had he been with his commanding officer, or if he had not gone there," Patrocinio said.

"But I am also proud that my son did not hesitate (to do his duty) even in the face of danger. He had no excuses, no reasons," he added.

## His mistahs

Bulong was described by his PMA classmates as kind and very amiable.

2nd Lt. Allan Mangaser, Bulong's roommate in the academy, described him as "mabait, magaling makisama at palakaibigan (kind, easy to get along with, friendly)."

The two were also teammates in the 45-day Scout Rangers Orientation Course.

Mangaser, in a telephone interview with the INQUIRER Mindanao Bureau, said Bulong never had a disagreement with any of their company mates.

"He was very nice but if we were given an order, he would go to work immediately," he said.

Another mistah, 2nd Lt. Jeoffrey Tacio, said Bulong had made a "supreme sacrifice for the service." Bulong was the third member of the PMA "Sanghaya" Class of 2000 to die.

2nd Lt. Jessica Chavez, 22, was found dead on Feb. 9 in her barracks in Fort Bonifacio. Another classmate, 2nd Lt. Jurin Paswik, was killed in an encounter in Jolo last March.

Bulong will be buried at the Libingan ng mga Bayani on Saturday morning even as his comrades in Basilan continue to wage a war against the Abu Sayyaf. With reports from Joselle Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau and Martin P. Marfil



HERO'S welcome. The parents of 2nd Lt. Gene Kenneth Bulong, Patrocinio and Carmelita, stand at the door of their home in Bagong Nayan, Antipolo City, where their son's body lies in state. EDWIN BACASMAS

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## Malacañang seeks help of Vatican

(From page A1)

pray so that she would have the courage and faith to overcome "this difficult chapter in your presidency."

Tauran, reportedly one of the top four men in the Vatican, has been dispatched by Pope John Paul II to quell trouble in various parts of the world.

It was the second time in a week that the President had sought divine intervention in public.

On May 31, the President prayed for the safety of the Dos Palmas hostages.

"Let us surrender... the Dos Palmas hostages to the most holy will of our Heavenly Father. We know that it is only God who can truly protect them from harm," Ms Macapagal said at a Mass commemorating the silver anniversary of Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin's designation as cardinal.

The President conferred on Tauran the Order of Sikatuna, Rank of Datu, which is the country's highest award.

"You could be a channel to hasten the resolution of this crisis," the President told Tauran. They discussed issues of concern to the Philippines and the Vatican.

A Malacañang statement said Tauran had expressed sadness that his visit to the country coincided with the latest Abu Sayyaf kidnapping.

The French-born archbishop reportedly said that news picturing the entire country in a state of chaos was misleading.

"The news that your country is in a state of war is not true," he said.

In presenting the Sikatuna award, the President cited Tauran's efforts in giving special attention to the Philippines through his personal participation in the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the Philippines.

He was cited in particular for his "exemplary support for the Philippine government's peace initiative and for being a true and tested friend of the Filipino people."



# Import keys Mobiline win

## Ward unloads 61 points; SMB blasts Purefoods

**GAMES TOMORROW (PhilSports)**  
5:15 p.m.—Tanduay vs Sta. Lucia  
7:30 p.m.—Pop Cola vs Alaska

BY MARC ANTHONY REYES

**JERROD Ward finally put some spice in this import-flavored PBA Commissioner's Cup last night.**

Amid bland performance of debuting imports, Ward stirred up a sizzling show by making 61 points, including 11 three-pointers, and grabbing 16 rebounds to lead Mobiline to a 93-

87 win over Barangay Ginebra at PhilSports.

It was the third most explosive debut by an import ever since Billy Ray Bates piled up 64 points for Crispa in 1983, and Mitchell Wiggins banged in 62 points for Ajejo in 1994.

"What's the highest point ever?" the 25-year-old Ward asked after learning about scoring records. "I think that can be broken, too." He was referring to Tony Harris' scoring mark of 105 points.

During the measurement last week, he said it would be easy for him to score 70 points in the PBA. And last night, he earned his bragging rights.

However, according to Mobiline coach Louie Alas, the 6-foot-5 former University of Michigan Wolverine was just making a statement to the team that rejected him—Ginebra.

The Ginebra let him slip by after learning that he sustained major injuries on both knees, which he successfully recovered from to become part of Michigan's "Fab Five II," whose original cast includes Chris Webber, Jalen Rose and Juwan Howard.

Alas said he didn't expect that kind of game from Ward who appeared complacent at practice.

San Miguel Beer, with import Nate Johnson also debuting impressively, opened its title-

retention bid with a 100-80 rout of Purefoods in the second game.

**MOBILINE 93**—Ward 61, Camaso 8, Gonzales 6, Cui 5, Ravena 5, Ejercito 4, Fran 2, Codinera 2, Demape 0.

**GINEBRA 87**—Fletcher 31, Limpot 22, Caguioa 16, Lago 6, Hellerbrand 5, David 5, Magtulis 2, Calpilo 0.

Quarters: 24-24, 46-37, 60-62, 93-87.

**SMB 100**—Johnson 33, Seigle 18, Ildefonso 15, Abuda 10, Lago 8, Belasco 6, Racela 4, Duet 4, Pena 2, Mente 0.

**PUREFOODS 80**—Wood 28, Evangelista 20, Castillo 20, Yee 10, Patrimonio 2, Fernandez 0, Guerrero 0, Escobar 0.

Quarters: 25-19; 53-42; 80-56; 100-80.

## Batangas 5, SJ Knights clip rivals

**GAMES FRIDAY (RMC Gym, Davao)**  
3:00 p.m.—Cebu vs Socsargen  
5:30 p.m.—Negros vs Davao

BY ROY LUARCA

**STA. CRUZ, Laguna**—Alex Compton took charge when Rome Adducul fouled out last night, lifting the LBC Batangas Blades to a pulsating 94-90 conquest of the FedEx Laguna Lakers in the Metropolitan Basketball Association First Phase at the San Luis Sports Complex here.

Defying all guards thrown against him, Compton scored the final seven points of the game as the Blades posted their second straight win and took the solo lead in the eight-team field.

The debuting Lakers, who led most part of the game through Chris Clay and Jeffrey Flowers, led for the last time at 90-87, before Compton went on a binge as soon as Adducul left the floor with 1 minute and 35 seconds to go.

Earlier, the Andok's San Juan Knights vented their ire on the Nueva Ecija Patriots to post a 110-71 rout.

Their egos pricked by an 84-81 beating dealt them by the LBC Batangas Blades on Sunday, the Knights showed the form that made them the reigning national titlists to turn the Patriots' debut into a nightmarish experience.

A Blitz Three start by Raffi Reavis sparked a 9-0 run and hinted of things to come, as the Knights never letup in their offense to smother the Patriots, who showed up without starting center Bob Allen.

The 6-foot-6 Fil-Am wasn't able to secure his working permit from the Bureau of Immigration and sat at the Patriots' bench in street clothes.

Kalani Ferreria added to Nueva Ecija's woes as he repeatedly intruded the lane against the much smaller Matt Makulintal and wound up with 22 points and six rebounds, earning him player of the game honors.

Only Francis Aquino hit his stride for the Patriots, who were held to 10 points in the first quarter, with 24 points as nobody else managed to score in twin digits. Sonny Manucat turned out to be a big disappointment as he could only account for two points.

The scores:

**ANDOK'S SAN JUAN 110**—Ferreria 22, Dacia 18, Calaguio 13, Reavis 13, Capobres 9, Alcantara 9, Castillo 8, Newton 7, Otto 5, Rodriguez 1, Banares 0.

**NUOVA ECJA 71**—Aquino 24, Makulintal 9, Bansil 9, Punzalan 8, De Guzman 7, Bautista 4, Racho 4, De Guia 2, J. de Guzman 2, Bunyi 0.

Quarters: 19-10, 48-33, 71-52, 110-71.

## UST jin bags silver for RP

**TSHOMLEE Go**, 20-year-old UST Education sophomore, bagged a silver medal to spark a remarkable Petron Philippine Team showing in the recent World Cup Taekwondo 2001 championships in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

The 5-foot-9 Go, silver medalist in the Asian and Seatu championships and bronze winner in the US Open held earlier this year, lost to Korean Yang Chang II in the flyweight finals after beating Madagascar's Rahearuona Jean Fidely, Iran's Gelzad Kohdadad Kanjohbeh and Turkey's Sedat Bekdemir in earlier rounds.

The Petron RP Team also won three other bronze medals through Olympians Roberto Cruz and Eva Marie Ditan, both finweight, and heavyweight Dax Alberto Morfe.

With one silver and two bronzes, the Filipinos tied with Lesotho for the 10th overall in the women's group. Eighteen countries were represented in both divisions.

Cruz toppled Iran's M. Reza Mehdiadeh and Egypt's Tamer Salah before losing to Spain's Juan Ramon Ramos in the semifinals.

Ditan whipped Malaysia's Claudia Wee Chwee Wei and Mexico's Yaquelin Licona but fell to Chinese Taipei's Chen Shih Hsin in the semis, while Morfe, silver medalist in the Seatu tilt held also in Vietnam, drew a first round bye, beat Germany's Czech in the quarters and tumbled to Vietnamese Nguyen Van Hung in the semis.

The Filipinos' trip, bankrolled by Petron and the Philippine Sports Commission, served as part of their preparation for the Southeast Asian Games in Kuala Lumpur this September.

Korea reigned supreme, winning three golds each in the men's and women's.

## Capriati-Hingis semis set

**PARIS**—Serving one point from an elusive victory, Jennifer Capriati stared at the clay, trying to calm her nerves in the tense silence. She bounced the ball five times, then managed to put it in play.

So much for the hard part. The rally ended with an errant backhand by Serena Williams, giving Capriati a shaky but sweet 6-2, 5-7, 6-2 victory in the French Open quarterfinals Tuesday.

Serving was the biggest hurdle for Capriati, who survived 10 double-faults and a bout of butterflies that cost her the second set.

"It was starting to become a nightmare a little bit," she said with a sheepish smile.

The No. 4-seeded Capriati earned her first semifinal berth at Roland Garros since 1990, when she made her Grand Slam debut as a carefree 14-year-old. Now she's 25 and much more aware of the stakes, which include a shot at her second major title this year.

Her semifinal opponent Thursday will be top-seeded Martina Hingis, who lost to Capriati in the Australian Open final four months ago. The winner of their match will be a heavy favorite to win her first French Open championship.

### Belgian teenagers

The other semifinal features two Belgian teenagers appearing in their first Grand Slam semifinal: No. 12-seeded Kim Clijsters and No. 14 Justine Henin.

Hingis, who has lost one set in five matches, moved a step closer to the only major title that has eluded her by beating Francesca Schiavone 6-1, 6-4.

Clijsters, 17, swept qualifier Petra Mandula 6-1, 6-3. Henin, 19, eliminated Lina Krasnoroutskaya 6-1, 6-2.

Top-seeded Gustavo Kuerten will play No. 4 Juan Carlos Ferrero in the men's semifinals for the second consecutive year Friday. Kuerten, the champion in 1997 and 2000, beat No. 7 Yevgeny Kafelnikov at Roland Garros for the third time in as many meetings, 6-1, 3-6, 7-6 (3), 6-4. Ferrero swept No. 6 Lleyton Hewitt 6-4, 6-2, 6-1.

The other quarterfinals will be Wednesday. No. 3 Andre Agassi plays No. 10-seeded Frenchman Sebastien

Grosjean, and No. 13 Alex Corretja faces unseeded 19-year-old Roger Federer.

Capriati appeared on the verge of an easy victory until she meekly double-faulted on match point at 5-4 in the second set, then dumped consecutive double-faults into the net in her next service game to let Williams even the match.

### Nervous

"Sometimes you have these moments where you just get really nervous," Capriati said. "It wasn't just the double faults. Even my shots, you know, I started missing. I just lost my timing there."

The squandered opportunity was especially galling because two months ago, Capriati failed to convert eight match points and lost to Williams' sister, Venus, in the Eriesson Open final. Of those eight match points, seven ended with a Capriati error, including one double fault.

"I think I learned my lesson from the last time," she said. "I just stayed in control. I just decided, 'Well, I've got another set to go. ... Wait for her to start making the errors again.'"

That's what happened. The sixth-seeded Williams was playing her first tournament after a two-month layoff because of knee tendinitis, and her own serve and backhand looked rusty. She lost the final six games of the opening set and never really found a groove. At one stage she unleashed a frustrated scream louder than her fuchsia dress.

"I had some shots that I could have made," Williams said. "Instead I hit them out."

Capriati sprayed some wild groundstrokes, too, but controlled most of the rallies and was the fitter player in the final set. She held serve in a 14-point game for 1-1, then took the lead for good when Williams made four unforced errors in the next game.



CAPRIATI: Now much more aware of the stakes

## Javier, 2 others share seniors lead

BY JONG ARCANO

**RETIRE**d Col. Rico Javier parred the last nine holes to preserve a four-over-par 76 and forge a three-way tie for the lead with fellow Riviera bet Danny Pizarro and little-known Tito Eusebio of Mimosa in the first round of the Philippine Seniors golf championship.

Javier's solid finish more than made up for his struggling 40 in the front nine as he lived up to his billing as one of the top seeds in this gathering of the country's best senior swinging citizens.

While Javier went on a backside charge at the Wack Wack west course, Eusebio picked up a triple-bogey 7 on the tough 15th, the same killer hole which dealt Pizarro a double-bogey setback that paved the way for the crowded leaderboard.

Caloy Coscolluela, another of the fancied bets in the 54-hole event jointly organized by the National Golf Association of the Philippines and the Federation of Philippine Senior Golfers, Inc. thrust himself into contention with a 77 for a second place tie with Teddy Yabes.

Just three strokes off the pace were former titlist Lucio Yan (Luisita), Joselito Jacinto (Wack Wack), Tony Sarmiento (CSEAA), Allan Gaston (Negros), Ben Liclican (Riviera) and Toto Bautista (Villamor).

A lucky player who failed to break 90, however, snatched the limelight from the better ones by holing his tee-shot on No. 3.

Isabelo Ferido, competing in handicap play and not in the Open division, assured himself of a share of a Yamaha cart donated by Kart Plaza Manufacturing when he aceed the 155-yard third hole with a Taylor Made 5-wood

and a Titleist No. 3. Ferido scored a 94.

Should nobody score a similar hole-in-one on the same hole in the next two rounds, Ferido stands to bring home the cart all by himself. Players who score aces on No. 3 will have to share the prize.

Mizuno bossman Benny Gopez heads the list of sponsors for the tourney. The other sponsors are Rep. Gilberto Duavit, Gov. Casimiro Ynares of Rizal, Lucio Yan, DHI, and the seniors associations of Veterans, Aguinaldo, Valley, Founders, Luisita and Bonifacio.

## Jody sweeps 'em at Subic

**SUBIC**—Caltex-Eclipse-Red Horse-Team Tom's made its presence felt anew with defending champion Jody Coseteng completing a sweep of the races in the fifth and sixth rounds of the Philippine National Touring Car Championships at the Subic International Raceway.

Looking almost unstoppable in his Toyota Corolla, Coseteng held off Ferdie Ong of Rota-Speedwelle-Outlast Battery, Nilo Pazcoguin of Tom's Auto Trend and Miguel Ramirez of Petron-SRA to the delight of a big weekend crowd.

Coseteng clocked 40:55.317 in the 15-lap race, including the fastest lap time for the day of 1:35.536 in the 10th lap.

## Pamaybay rules Cebu City 10K

**CEBU CITY**—Cebu's fast rising runner Tirso Pamaybay proved that his two previous victories were no flukes when he ruled last Sunday's second leg of the Adidas Pharmaton 10K Run held at the Cebu Provincial Capital.

Pamaybay clocked 35 minutes and 7 seconds to conquer the tough sloping course and relegate Cebu's erstwhile running sensation Rogelio Reli to second place in 36:00. Arvin Loberanis salvaged third in 36:05.

In the distaff side, Gaganay de Oro's Lorna Tolentino, a namesake of the actress, humbled the field to win in 46:23. Cebu's Ruvilyn Legaspi and nine-

"It was really a nice weekend for me. I just hope I can sustain the momentum until the closing rounds," said Coseteng, who is also being supported by Bilstein, Fujitsu-Ten, Lumar and Camspeed.

The back-to-back victories enabled Coseteng to wrest the overall lead in this 12-part annual series with a six-round aggregate of 65 points.

Pazcoguin, who held the lead after four rounds, dropped to second place with 58 points, while Ramirez skidded to third place with 52 points based on the 15-12-10-8-6 scoring system.

Coseteng's teammate, Edgen Dy-Liacco, finished sixth in the fifth round and seventh in the sixth round despite making his debut this year.

year-old Joey Raynn Lee finished second and third in 47:26 and 47:41, respectively.

Race director Raffi Uyitepo, together with Adidas Sports and Promo coordinator Goody Custodio, Pharmaton's Rudy Ikalina, Jale Labiran and Danny Reveche awarded the cash prizes, trophies, medals, Adidas shoes, gift packs and Rudy Project sunglasses to the winners.

The race was also co-sponsored by Gatorade Thirst Quenchers, Park Place Hotel, Nature's Spring, Pepsi-Cola, Rudy Project, Osaka Iridology, Nissan, The Freeman, [Charlie@Rhythms](mailto:Charlie@Rhythms) 101.9 and Seiko Service Center.

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Race 4—1. Virtual Reality 2. Impeccable/Perry's

Will 3. Down for Double 4. Noble Heart

Race 5—1. Primeministrator 2. Defense Minister

3. Color of the Wind

Race 6—1. Ocean Friend 2. Top secret 3. Knows

Love 4. Nine West

Race 7—1. Palace Hero 2. Glorious Riches 3. Main

Street/Living Legend 4. Perfect Nine

Race 8—1. D Gold Hunter 2. Dynamite Jack 3.

Puzzling Friend 4. Grand Dragon

## Gutierrez pulls away from rivals

**SUBIC**—Monching Gutierrez, Tom Pastor, Michelle Pritchard, Jon Mark Ong, Mikko David and Carlos Anton emerged as the undisputed winners in their respective categories in the 2001 Petron Grand Prix at the Subic International Raceway here Sunday.

Gutierrez, one of five mainstays of Gulf Oil-MP Turbo Racing Team, ruled one of two races to pull away in the overall standings in the 13-man SVI Challenge Cup with 52 points based on the 10-6-4-3-2- scoring system. He also finished second in the fifth round.

Pastor won the day's only other race in the SVI Challenge Cup, but remained a far second in the overall standings with 32 points.

In third place was Alex Padua of MP Turbo with 14 points, followed by Menchie Francisco of SRA in fourth place with 12 points and Oscar Aguilar of Caltex in fifth place with nine points.

Pritchard, one of two female drivers in the registry, split top honors with the debuting Ong in the novice category.

Pritchard, a member of the SRA Racing Team, dominated the fifth round, while Ong, a mainstay of AMA Motorworks, topped the sixth round.

Francisco, however, kept the lead in the novice class with 34 points built around two first-place, one runner-up and two third-place finishes. Aguilar was a distant second with 26 points.

In the production car championship, David shared the limelight with Anton but held on to the overall lead with 43 points.

Enzo and Carlo Pastor of team TEC were third and fourth placers with 26 and 23 points, respectively.

The event was organized by the Sports Values Inc. (SVI), headed by race legend Pocholo Ramirez.

### SPORTSWATCH

#### Twins get Mauer with No. 1 pick

**NEW YORK**—Joe Mauer, a slugging high school catcher with a strong arm, was taken by the Minnesota Twins with the No. 1 pick in Tuesday's Major League Baseball draft. Mauer, from Cretin-Derham Hall in St. Paul, Minnesota, is the first catcher drafted with the top pick since Milwaukee took B.J. Surhoff in 1985. The 6-foot-4 (1.93-meter), 205-pound (92 kilogram) Mauer was a standout in baseball, basketball and football, and intends to concentrate on playing baseball despite a scholarship to play quarterback at Florida State. The Chicago Cubs selected Mark Prior, the Southern California right-hander considered by some to be the best college pitcher ever, with the second pick.

#### Marion Jones, husband split

**NEW YORK**—Track star Marion Jones has separated from her husband, world shot put champion C.J. Hunter, and will seek a divorce. Jones, winner of a record five medals at the 2000 Olympics, stood at her husband's side at the games when he was accused of using performance-enhancing drugs. But she said the two have "irreconcilable differences, which have made nurturing our marriage extremely difficult." "Having no mutual children, we have determined that this course is best for our respective futures," she said Tuesday in a statement. The couple has been married since October 1998. Hunter has two children by a previous marriage. "For several years, C.J. and I relied on each other for support both on and off the track, which has left us with many memorable memories," Jones said. "I wish him well."

### SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

**BASKETBALL:** NBA Finals Game #1, 76ers vs Lakers at 9 a.m. (r - 9 p.m.) on ESPN

**TENNIS:** NCAA Div.1 Women's Tennis Championship Finals at 5:30 p.m. on ESPN

2001 French Open - Day 11 Semifinals at 8 p.m. (r - tomorrow at 1 a.m.) on SkyCable 17

**GOLF:** PGA Memorial Tournament, Final Round at 8 a.m. (r), Tour Highlights at 5:30 p.m. (r - 11 p.m.) on Star Sports

**BASEBALL:** Baseball Max at 8:30 a.m. (r) on ESPN

ESPN's Wednesday Night Baseball

at 1 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. on ESPN

**BOWLING:** Women's Bowling Association at 12 noon (r) on ESPN

World Tenpin Masters 2001 at 10:30 p.m. on ESPN

**BOXING:** Fight Time on Fox 2001 - Golden Gloves National Tournament of Champions at midnight on Star Sports

**AMERICAN FOOTBALL:** NFL Europe League 2001 Highlights Show at 4:30 p.m. on Star Sports

**SOCCER:** Futbol Mundial at 6:30 p.m. on Star Sports

International U-21 Tournament of Toulon, 3rd Place Game at 7 p.m., Finals at 9 p.m. on Star Sports.



## RP chessers score sweep

THE TEAM of six Milo Checkmate kids arrived from Hong Kong the other night with a resounding victory in their series of goodwill matches over their counterparts from the former Crown Colony. Bannered by 14-year-old Emmanuel Emperado of St. James College of Paranaque, the team garnered a total output of 17-1 after three rounds of play and swept all their matches in the first and second rounds.

# SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

## 3 Pinoy boxers lose in Ireland

BELFAST, Ireland—Setbacks struck Team Caltex Philippines on Tuesday when three of its stalwarts tasted heartbreaking losses in the World Amateur Boxing Championships at the Odyssey Arena here. Lightweight Anthony Iguisquiza absorbed a 16-27 drubbing from veteran Olympian George Lungu of Romania, flyweight Violito Payla was decisively beaten by Germany's Vardan Zakarjan, 14-13, while Arlan Lerio was beaten by Surriel Rotas of the Dominican Republic, 14-10, in the flyweight class.

# Lakers-76ers finals on

## Kobe watches Pearl Harbor; Shaquille promotes book

LOS ANGELES—Kobe Bryant went to a movie the other day, opting to see Pearl Harbor rather than watch Game 7 of the Eastern Conference finals.

Shaquille O'Neal, who promised to have his game face on by early in the week, pitched his best-selling book at a news conference Tuesday, and responded to a reporter's ringing cell phone by saying, "Tell them to call back later," drawing laughter from the assembled media.

And a few of the Los Angeles Lakers have talked openly about securing a spot in the record books by winning four straight over the Philadelphia 76ers to complete an unprecedented sweep of the playoffs.

"We've talked about it, our guys recognize the significance," Lakers forward Rick Fox said after his team's final practice before the NBA Finals begin Wednesday night (Thursday morning in Manila) at Staples Center. "We'd be up there with all the other great teams."

Are these guys confident, or what?

More importantly, are they focused after having last played on May 27?

The answers appear to be yes, and yes.

"We're confident, but we know what kind of a team Philly is, with an intense defense and a high scorer," Lakers forward Horace Grant said.

"They are very much prepared," Lakers coach Phil Jackson said of his players. "Being here is not a surprise, but how we have done it is a surprise. Their aptitude, attitude and appetite for this series and for playoff basketball is quite apparent."

After an up-and-down season low-lighted by the simmering feud of O'Neal and Bryant going public in January and injuries to both after that, the Lakers are healthy and on an incredible roll.

First came eight straight wins to finish the season, and now 11 to begin the playoffs—an accomplishment matched only by the 1989 Lakers, who were swept by Detroit's Bad

Boys in the NBA Finals after starters Byron Scott and Magic Johnson sustained hamstring injuries.

"Sometimes, you have to have your trials and tribulations before you see the light at the end of the tunnel," Lakers reserve Robert Horry said. "We're at the end of the tunnel."

"For the most part, we're just taking it one game at a time."

That's been the Lakers' mantra for weeks, and it's worked to the point where the odds on the finals are unreal.

The Lakers are listed as 11-1/2-point favorites in Game 1, and with one oddsmaker, a bettor picking them has to lay \$2,400 to win \$100 while a 76ers supporter wins \$1,800 by laying \$100.

These are rather remarkable numbers considering the participants finished the season with identical 56-26 records and split their two games.

But while the Lakers have breezed to 11 wins in the playoffs by an average of 15.4 points, the 76ers have gone 11-7, and reached the finals for the first time since 1983 by winning their last two series in seven games.

Tyrone Hill said the 76ers didn't feel like underdogs, that it was a media thing.

However, the starting forward also said if the 76ers contained O'Neal to some degree, "then we're going to have a chance."

While O'Neal is averaging 29.3 points in the postseason, Bryant is averaging 31.6, and Derek Fisher, who is averaging 15.1, was 15-of-20 from 3-point range while the Lakers were manhandling San Antonio in the Western Conference finals.

"He's elevated his game to tops in the league," Philadelphia's Aaron McKie said of Bryant, and O'Neal obviously agrees, having called Bryant the NBA's best player after Game 2 of the conference finals.

McKie, the NBA's sixth man of the year, said his team

has to contain O'Neal and Bryant individually due to the shooting abilities of the Lakers' role players.

"They're confident, they haven't lost a game," 76ers star Allen Iverson said. "They're supposed to feel that way."

"There's a flip side to that—we didn't come all this way to roll over and die. We're going to play every game like it's our last, we feel like we can win."

"Once they throw the ball up, that's when the party starts."

Listed as a 6-footer, Iverson became the shortest player ever to win MVP honors when he did so this season.

He showed his mettle by scoring 44 points as the 76ers beat Milwaukee 108-91 on Sunday night to earn their berth in the finals, and is averaging 32.1 points in the playoffs.

"I'm a big fan of his," Fox said. "I'm quite impressed with his progress; his leadership has been there, his heart is incredible. It's a joy to watch him play, compete against him."

"You don't become an MVP candidate in this league by doing it in a few games. He's been doing it all year."

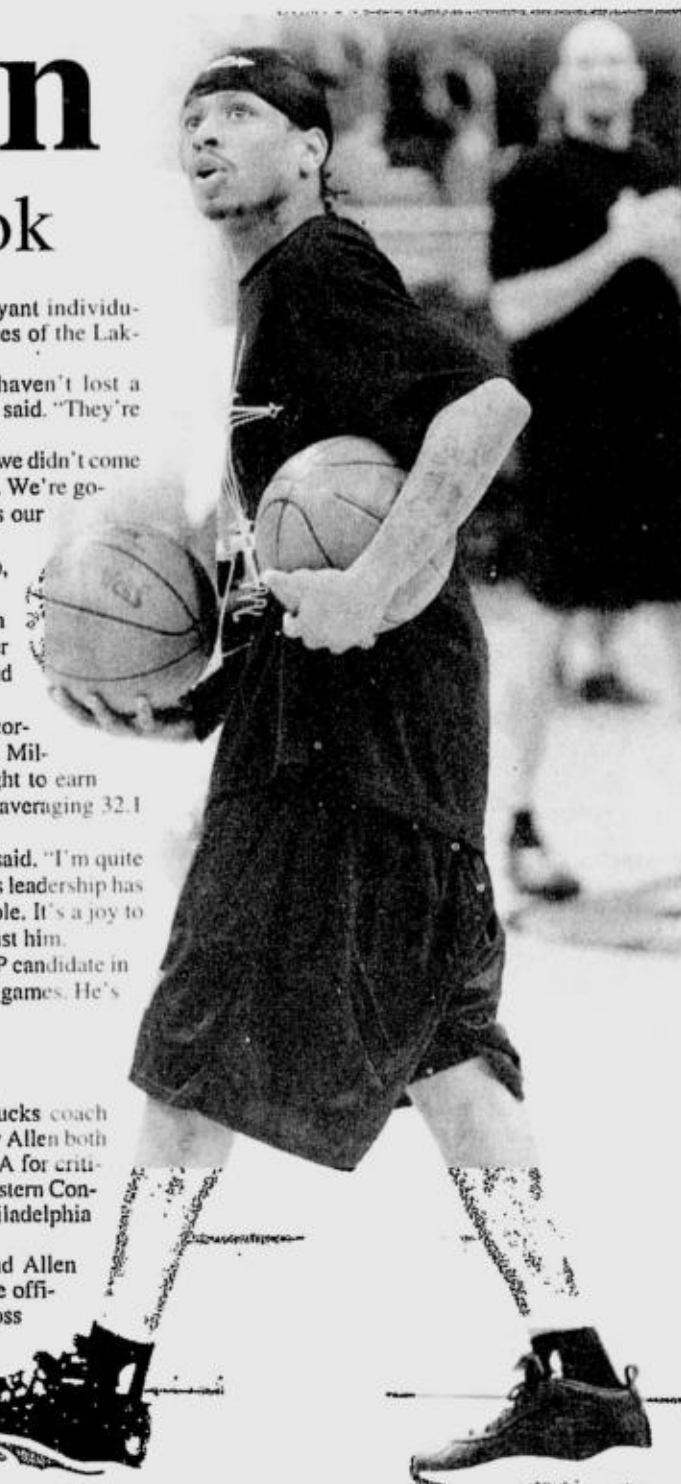
## Karl, Allen fined

NEW YORK—Milwaukee Bucks coach George Karl and star guard Ray Allen both were fined Tuesday by the NBA for criticizing the officiating in their Eastern Conference final series with the Philadelphia 76ers.

Karl was fined \$25,000 and Allen \$10,000 dollars for blasting the officials during their seven-game loss to Philadelphia. The Bucks' organization also was fined 50,000 dollars.

Several close calls went against Milwaukee in an 89-88 defeat that gave the Sixers a three games to two lead. After the game, the Bucks claimed the NBA wanted Philadelphia to reach the NBA Finals.

IVERSON will have his hands full against the Lakers.



### LOS ANGELES LAKERS STARTERS

|                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Shaquille O'Neal<br>28.8 pts., 13.0 reb., 2.6 blk.                                  | Horace Grant<br>8.3 pts., 7.0 reb., 0.8 blk.                                        | Rick Fox<br>9.7 pts., 4.1 reb., 3.2 ast.                                            | Kobe Bryant<br>28.9 pts., 6.0 reb., 5.1 ast.                                        | Derek Fisher<br>12.7 pts., 3.7 reb., 4.0 ast.                                       | Phil Jackson<br>Head coach                                                          |

### PHILADELPHIA 76ERS STARTERS

|                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Dikembe Mutombo<br>12.3 pts., 13.1 reb., 2.9 blk.                                   | Tyrone Hill<br>9.2 pts., 8.7 reb., 0.4 blk.                                         | Jumaine Jones<br>5.1 pts., 3.2 reb., 0.6 ast.                                       | Allen Iverson<br>31.3 pts., 4.0 reb., 5.0 ast.                                      | Aaron McKie<br>12.5 pts., 4.3 reb., 6.0 ast.                                        | Larry Brown<br>Head coach                                                           |

# Ana guns for finals slot against Welcoat today

Games today:

3:30 p.m.—Boysen-MLQU vs Univ. of Assumption  
5:30 p.m.—Ana Freezers vs Welcoat Paints

BY DENNIS EROA

CROWD-FAVORITE Ana Freezers aims for a finals slot when it meets defending champion Welcoat Paints today in the PBL Chairman's Cup crossover semifinals at the Makati Coliseum.

The Freezer Kings are aiming for a third finals appearance since winning the 1998 Centennial Cup title. However, they will play sans charismatic mentor Rudy Mendoza, who is out of the country due to business commitments.

Gametime is set at 5:30 p.m., after the 3:30 p.m. PYBL tussle between titleholder Boysen-MLQU and Univ. of Assumption. Like Ana, Boysen-MLQU,

many-time National Intercollegiate and NBL winner, enjoys a twice-to-beat advantage.

Taking over the coaching chores are skipper and assistant playing coach Rey Mendez and Jun Molina. Ana is hoping to avoid what had happened to Shark Energy Drink, which must go into a playoff after losing to sister team GIV Beauty Soap, 58-34, last Tuesday.

Welcoat will go all-out in its bid to extend the series and make its fifth straight championship stint. Both teams hold a 1-1 card against each other. Welcoat prevailed in their elimination encounter, 75-66, last May 12 but Ana came back to escape with a 73-70 triumph in their quarterfinal meeting last May 31.

Ana is counting on Dondon Mendoza, Paul Artadi, Roland Pascual and Ronald Tubid. Welcoat boasts of Ren Ren Ritualo, Yancy de Ocampo, Eugene Tan, Jojo Manalo and Brix Encarnacion.

# Yancy, brod power Assisi

BY DENNIS EROA

BROTHERS Yancy and Ranidel de Ocampo struck hardest as St. Francis College of Assisi dealt St. Benilde its first loss with a runaway 84-70 triumph yesterday in the 2nd Asian University Basketball Championship at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

And two local teams—defending champion University of Manila and FEU—formally bowed out of the running for final slots after losing their games against their respective foreign counterparts.

Chinese Taipei University Sports Federation escaped with an 84-82 cliffhanger over FEU, while Beijing Shougong Industrial College survived UM, 85-78, in the nightcap.

Both Taipei and Beijing improved their records to 2-2 (win-loss), while FEU and UM dropped to 1-3 in this week-long cagefest sponsored by Globe Telecom.

Caltex, Century Park Hotel, Pagcor, Jollibee, PCSO, JVC, SC Johnson, San Miguel Corp., Shangri-La Restaurant, Absolute Distilled Water, Star Sports of Korea, Philippine Sports Commission and IBC 13.

The day belonged to St. Francis which snapped St. Benilde's three game winning streak. The Doves and the Blazers are now tied for the lead with identical 3-1 cards.

St. Francis and St. Benilde seek finals seats when they battle Beijing and Taipei, respectively today.

Former national youth team player James Zablan missed three straight free throws with no time left as the Tamaraws bungled a winning chance against the visitors.

The De Ocampos banged the boards with impunity and combined for 36 points, while Al Vergara delighted the crowd with his perfect passes aside from scoring 21.

## Judge denies Tiny petition

BY JUNE NAVARRO

THE MANILA Regional Trial Court yesterday denied Quinteliano Literal's petition for a temporary restraining order but ordered a change of venue and date on the Basketball Association of the Philippines' elections.

Judge Artemio Tipon, presiding judge of the court's Branch 46, directed the feuding parties to reset the elections on June 20 at the library of the Manila RTC.

Gonzalo Puyat, president of POC-sanctioned BAP, said that the elections will push through as scheduled at the Penthouse of the Manila Bank Building in Makati City.

Brigido Dulay, lead counsel for Gonzalo Puyat's BAP, said they would file a motion for reconsideration, questioning the order of holding the polls on another place and time.

"He (Tipon) should have ruled only on the

granting or denial of the petition and not go as far as rescheduling the elections," said Dulay, a member of the BAP executive board.

Since the petition was not granted, Dulay said their group could still hold an election and wait for Tipon's decision on the appeal.

"If Tipon fails to acknowledge our appeal, then we have no alternative but to elevate the case to the Court of Appeals," said Dulay.

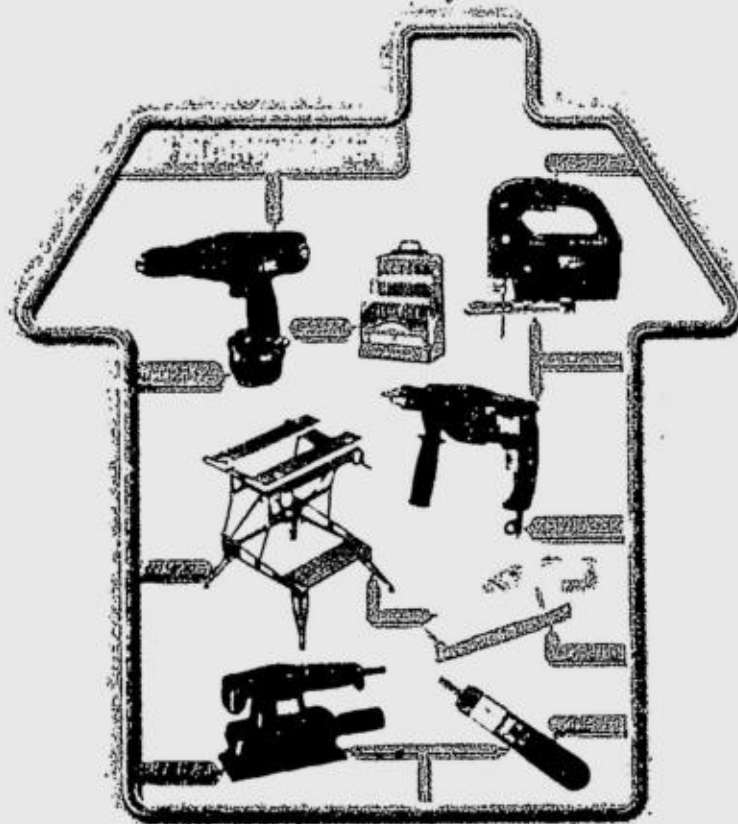
Literal, for his part, hailed the court's decision, spelling out a partial victory in his bid as president of the POC-sanctioned BAP.

However, Literal said once the other group defies the order and continues with the elections today as mandated by the POC, the long-running imbroglio would probably see no light at the end of the tunnel.

Last month, Puyat sent 29 notices to the members of the electorate, notifying them of the polls in an effort to end the six-month leadership squabble.

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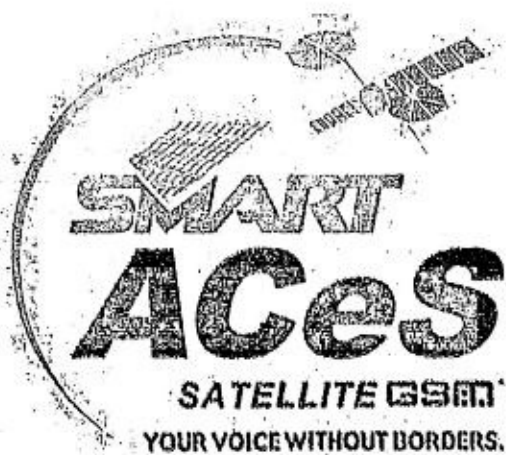
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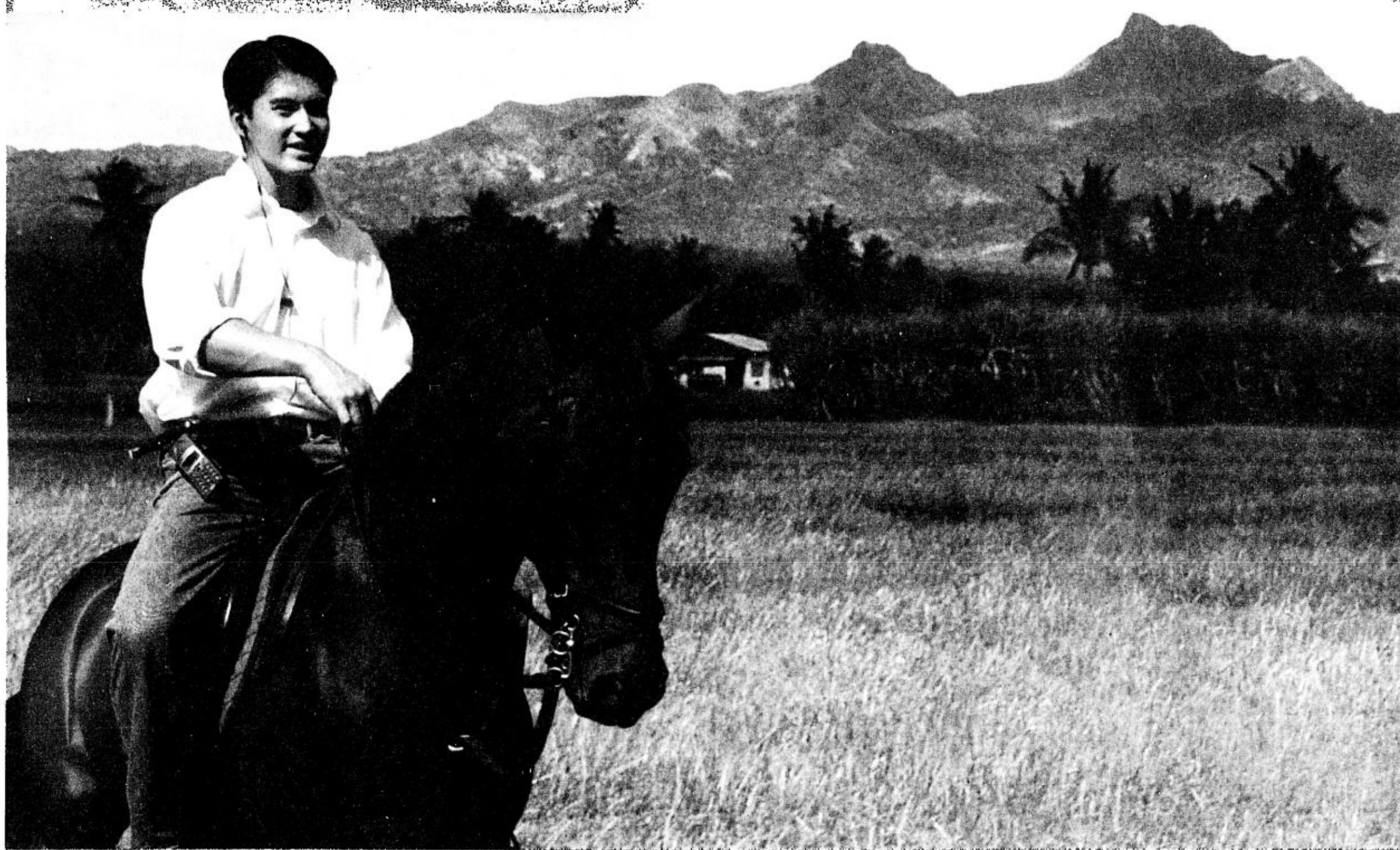
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A18

# METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Valenzuela woman abducted  
by men in bonnets slain

A18

## Kidnapping-slay suspects fall

BY CATHY C. YAMSUAN  
AND ALCUIN PAPA

NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation agents over the weekend arrested the suspected mastermind and three accomplices in the kidnapping and murder of student Mark Bacalla.

They were identified as Onofre Surat, 38, the alleged mastermind, his wife Edna, both of Sampaloc, Manila; Rodrigo Catungal, 22, of Tala, Caloocan City; and Jerro Garcia, 22, a waiter and a resident of Sarmiento, San Jose del Monte, Bulacan.

Bacalla, 24, a graduate of the AMA Computer College and eldest son of the late Quezon City Regional Trial Court Judge Marciano Bacalla, was abducted on May 3, 2001.

On May 17, Bacalla's body was found in a shallow grave in Barangay Rizal, Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija.

Yesterday, after Justice Secretary Hernando Perez presented Surat to the media, Ofelia Bacalla, the victim's mother, approached Surat and slapped him several times and shrieked, "Hayup ka! Hayup ka! Bakit mo pinatay ang anak ko (You're a beast! Why did you kill my son?)"

KIDNAPPING/A18

## Taguig fire kills four

BY NELSON F. FLORES

A FAMILY of four, including a one-year-old child, died in a two-hour fire that razed at least 30 houses in a densely populated residential area in Taguig on Tuesday night.

Police identified the victims as Carlito Andal, 37; his wife Linda, 39, and sons Charlie, 4; and Milenyo, 1, all of Kalayaan Street in Barangay Ususan, Taguig.

Police said the still smoldering bodies of the Andals were found huddled in their bedroom.

Investigation showed that the blaze began in the Andal house at 7:11 p.m. Tuesday.

Police said the fire quickly spread to nearby houses, which were mostly made up of light materials.

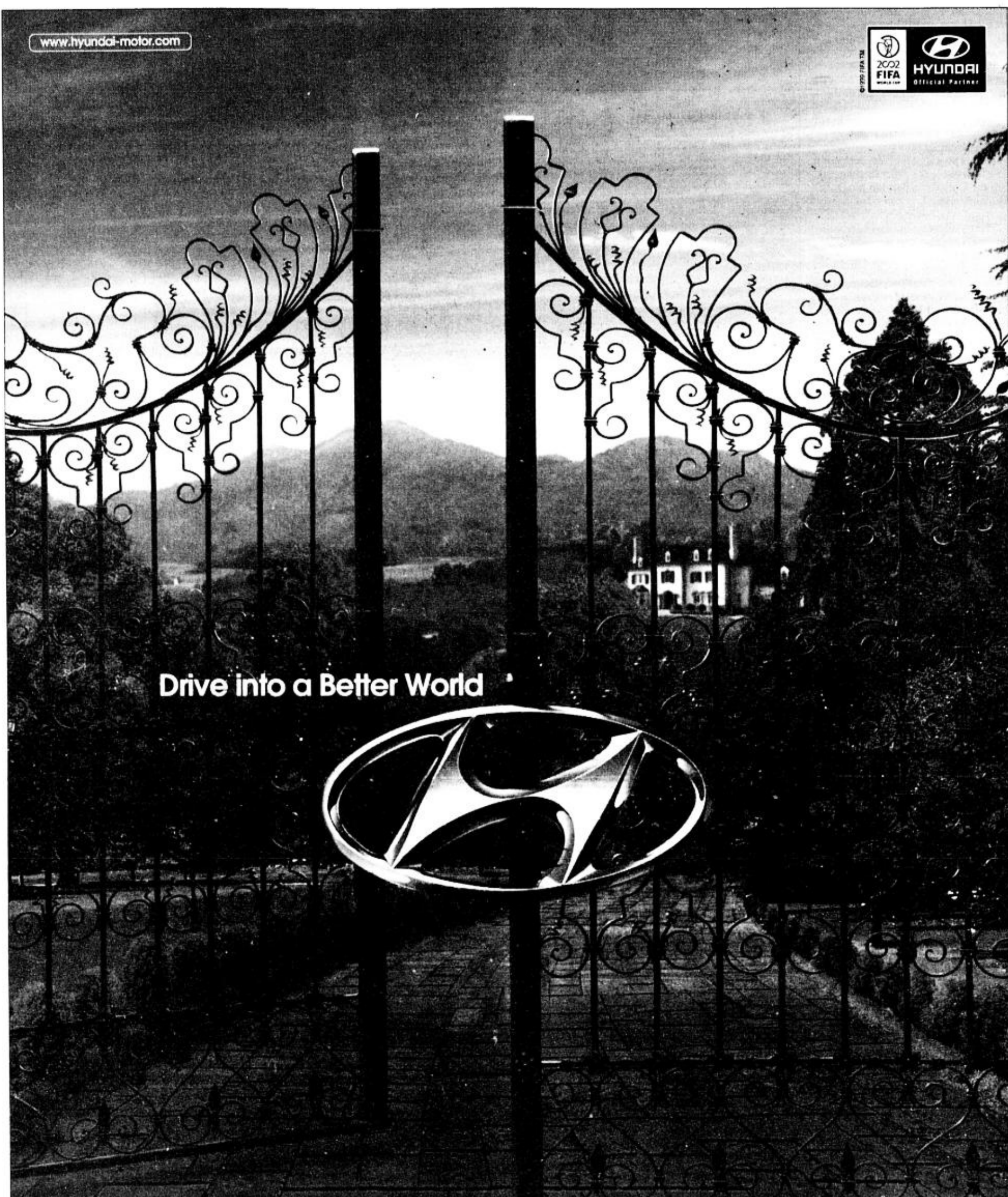
Firemen were able to prevent the fire from spreading to other communities.

Fire Officer 1 Ramir Ortega, Taguig Fire Station desk officer, said the Andals were trapped inside their house because the fire apparently spread rapidly.

He said Carlito Andal was able to escape from the burning house but returned inside apparently to save his wife and children.

Ortega said hundreds of kibitzers, low water pressure and narrow roads made it difficult for firemen to put the fire under control.

The cause of the fire was not immediately known, police said.



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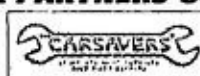
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## 'Unknown' who beat Mathay proclaimed

BY ANDREA TRINIDAD-ECHAVEZ

THE COMMISSION on Elections yesterday finally proclaimed as Quezon City's fourth congressional district representative Nanette Castelo-Daza, a virtual unknown who beat former congressman Edcel Lagman and former Quezon City Mayor Ismael Mathay Jr.

Lagman's camp immediately denounced Daza's proclamation as "a nullity."

Daza, a former councilor in the city's fourth district, won the three-cornered fight by garnering 34,090 votes in the final tally of the Commission on Elections.

Lagman was a close second with 32,642 votes, with Mathay lagging behind by about 2,000 votes.

Daza's proclamation was delayed by more than two weeks after Lagman filed with the Comelec a petition for Daza's disqualification. Lagman cited massive fraud and vote-buying.

The Comelec's first division junked Lagman's petition due to technicalities, prompting the local board of canvassers to schedule Daza's proclamation.

Two of the three board of canvassers members, Comelec lawyer Alioden Dalaig and school superintendent Aquilina Rivas, were not present when

Daza was proclaimed at Albert Hall. The only board of canvassers member who was present was city prosecutor Claro Arellano. Another Comelec lawyer, Jocelyn de Mesa, replaced Dalaig.

Rivas was said to be in the United States.

Daza said it was Dalaig, the chair of the board, who originally scheduled her proclamation.

The absence of the two board members delayed the proclamation, which was initially set for 8:30 a.m. yesterday.

Lagman himself described the proclamation as "precipitate, improvident, illegal and orchestrated."

"How can the Quezon City board of canvassers make a proclamation based on a resolution which is not final and executory," the former Albay congressman asked.

He accused the "partisan handlers of Daza," including Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr., of allegedly instigating "illegal acts" before, during and after the May 14 elections.

Daza and Belmonte are from the administration party Lakas-NUCD-UMDP.

Lagman said he would question Daza's proclamation before the Comelec today.

# Business partner suspected in killing of Japanese man

BY ALCUIN PAPA

THE BUSINESS partner of Japanese national Keiichi Wada is being considered as the prime suspect in his murder early Friday morning, Manila police said yesterday.

An investigator with the Western Police District homicide section, who requested anonymity, said Wada's alleged business partner Zhoso Otani left the Philippines a few hours after Wada's body was found floating in Manila Bay last Friday.

"We all know that flight is an indication of guilt," the investigator said. "But we are still closely investigating the incident and building a case against the suspect."

The body of Wada, 40, and a former postal officer, was found in Manila Bay in front of the Diamond Hotel on Roxas Boulevard Friday morning. The victim's body bore four stab wounds and lacerations in different parts of the body.

A knife was found still stuck in Wada's abdomen.

Wada and Otani were business partners who ran videoke bars in Oranguren, Davao City, police said.

Police believed that business transactions gone awry could have caused a rift between the two partners.

A team of Manila investigators led by SPO2 Athos de Quiros are set to go to Davao City for further investigation.

Wada reportedly owned large tracts of agricultural lands in Japan.

Police learned that Otani met Wada at the Narita International Airport in Japan on May 29. The following day, Wada returned to Manila and checked into the Sandico Tourist Inn on M.H. del Pilar Street in Ermita, Manila.

Last Thursday night, Wada checked out of the inn with Otani footing the bill. The next day, Wada was found dead and Otani had flown back to Japan.

WPD homicide section investigators are working closely with Japanese police and officials from the Japanese Embassy in probing the case.

Police also said a vendor alleg-

edly saw Wada board a motorized banca in Manila Bay with three men and two women early Friday morning.

Before Wada boarded the boat with the five other people, he bought cigarettes from the vendor, the latter told police.

Police have yet to establish the identities of the five other people but they theorized that those people could have been hired to kill Wada.

Police earlier said the Japanese might have been a holdup victim.

Police are also checking out witnesses' account that just before Wada's body was found, a male was seen swimming up to the Manila Bay seawall near the spot where Wada's body was found. The male, who was dripping wet and still fully clothed, crossed Roxas Boulevard and vanished, witnesses said.

## Man slain over tuition

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

TRUE to his calling, a butcher on Tuesday reportedly hacked dead an alleged Caloocan drug addict who refused to pay his debt, which the suspect meant to use for his daughter's schooling.

Police identified the suspect as Jose Yape, 31, a butcher and meat dealer, of San Francisco Street, Barangay Karuhatan, Valenzuela City.

Yape allegedly stabbed and slit the throat of Loreto Sanchez, 40, in the latter's house on Sampaguita Street, 11th Avenue, Caloocan City, police said.

POI Marlon Bingayen said Yape demanded that Sanchez pay back the P1,000 he owed the butcher for his

daughter's tuition, investigation showed.

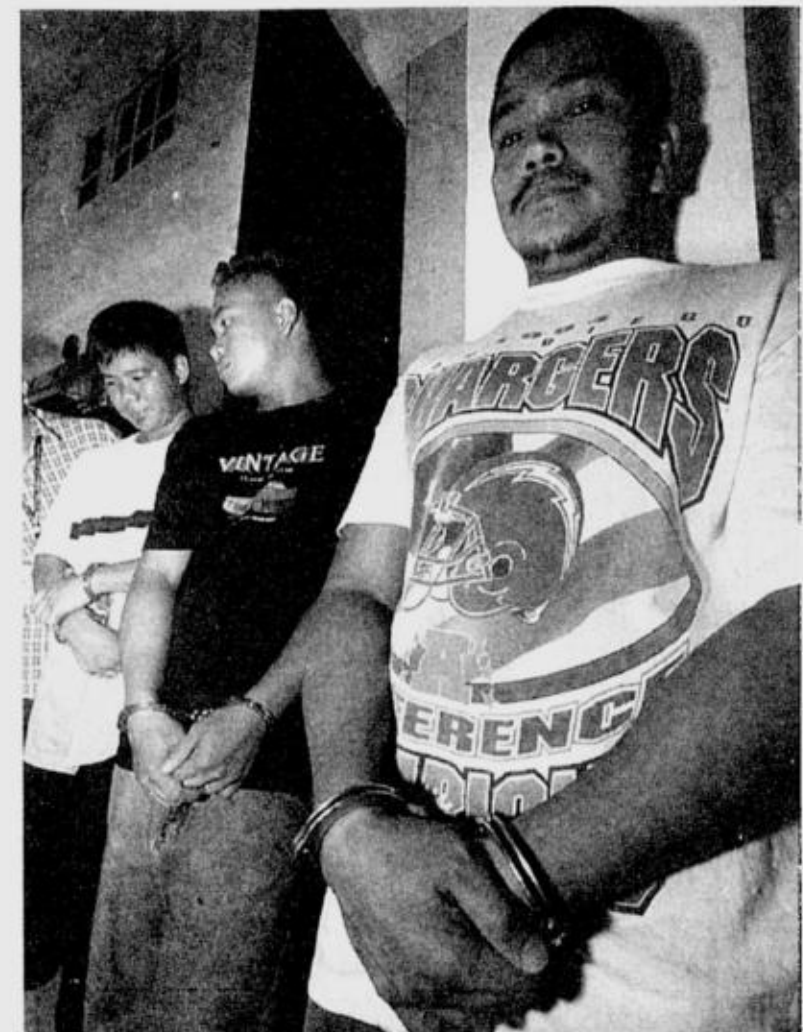
But Sanchez, said to be a drug user, ignored Yape whenever he tried to collect payment. At one point, Sanchez even offered illegal drugs as payment, police claimed.

Last week, Sanchez and Yape had a heated argument when Sanchez again refused to pay.

On Tuesday, a drunken Yape, armed with a butcher's knife, stormed Sanchez's house and demanded payment for the last time.

When Sanchez still refused to pay, Yape slit his throat and hacked him several times with a butcher's knife, police said.

Yape is now detained at the Caloocan Police Headquarters.



BACALLA kidnapping suspects presented to media at the Department of Justice are (from left) Onofre Surat, Rodrigo Catungal and Jerro Garcia.

ERIKARAZAS

## Kidnapping-slay ...

(From page A17)

As policemen and NBI agents tried to subdue Mrs. Bacalla, relatives who came with her lunged at the other suspects.

"It's more difficult to lose a son than a husband," Mrs. Bacalla cried.

Surat, his wife and Catungal were arrested in a house in Pineda, Pasig City. NBI agents said they found a 9mm pistol in Surat's house.

Garcia surrendered to the NBI yesterday just before the presentation of the suspects to the press.

Arugay said Garcia later surrendered to the NBI and admitted his participation in the crime.

Charges of kidnapping with homicide were filed against the suspects before the Quezon City Trial Court along with one count of illegal possession of firearms.

NBI Special Actions Unit chief Edmund Arugay told reporters that Surat, Catungal and Garcia planned the kidnapping. They also planned to ask for a hefty ransom from Mrs. Bacalla.

On May 3, Surat, said to be a friend of the Bacallas, called Mark and invited him to a birthday party at the Cabaret Bar Restaurant, which was reportedly owned by Surat.

Catungal was a doorman while Garcia was a waiter at Surat's restaurant, the NBI said.

Mark went to the restaurant and joined the suspects in drinking until 1 a.m.

Mark was very drunk and Surat offered to drive him home, the NBI said. Mark agreed and gave the three men the key to his Honda Civic.

Arugay said that on a dark road in Novaliches, Catungal and Garcia suddenly jumped at Mark. They tied him

up with a nylon rope and gagged him with a towel. Mark tried to fight back, and the three men beat him up until he died, the NBI said.

"Nanlaban kasi (He put up a fight)," Surat admitted during the press conference yesterday.

Surat could have revealed more about the abduction, but Perez cut short the press conference after he was told that the suspect was not accompanied by a lawyer.

That was when Mrs. Bacalla walked up to Surat and hit him with her bare hands.

The NBI said Surat confessed that they had not intended to kill Mark but only to kidnap him and ask for ransom.

The men brought Mark's body to Barangay Rizal in Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija where they buried him with the help of Surat's uncle Lino Pader.

When they returned to Manila, they negotiated with Mark's mother for a ransom. They initially asked for P5 million but brought it down to P400,000 after Mrs. Bacalla said she could not produce P5 million.

Mrs. Bacalla gave the kidnappers the money not knowing that her son was already dead.

On May 17, the group demanded another P400,000. When Mrs. Bacalla asked for proof that her son was still alive, the three men produced Mark's bracelet, watch and ring.

But the second pay-off did not happen because Mrs. Bacalla asked for police assistance. On the same day, Mark's body was found in the shallow grave in Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija.

Two guest relations officers of Surat's restaurant who witnessed the abduction went to the NBI and offered to testify against the suspects.

## Rape victim rescued

BY AGNES E. DONATO

POLICE yesterday rescued in Antipolo City a 32-year-old woman who was allegedly abducted and sexually abused by her 37-year-old neighbor since Monday morning.

Suspect Leopoldo Vicente Delleria Jr. of Paliparan, Cavite City, evaded arrest when he sensed that an Antipolo resident tipped off police about his whereabouts.

Investigators said Delleria grabbed the woman at knifepoint while she was on her way to a store in their neighborhood in Cavite City at around 7 a.m. Monday.

The woman told the police that Delleria forced her to board a passenger

bus with him and warned her not to talk or have eye contact with any of the other passengers.

Investigators said the two reached Antipolo City shortly before 10 a.m. Monday and proceeded to a house in Sitio Tagisan, Barangay Bagong Nasyon. There, Delleria held her for 14 hours and allegedly abused her.

Shortly after Monday midnight, the woman tried to escape but Delleria caught her and beat her up.

Marissa Casabuena, the owner of the house and friend of Delleria, saw the beating and called Antipolo policemen, who rescued the woman.

Police were still looking for Delleria, who would be charged with abduction with rape.

## Use the Marines in Basilan fighting

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo



PEOPLE who are criticizing government troops for the escape of the Abu Sayyaf bandits who were cornered in Lamitan, Basilan are doing so in the safety and comfort of their homes, offices or other places far from the scene of the fighting.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, appeals for understanding of the fighting men in the field.

Yes, it's very easy for people who are monitoring the fighting in Basilan through the media to become armchair generals.

It's like watching a boxing bout or a game of chess. The spectators or onlookers see the bad moves of the players. A miron, uzi, or whatever you call an onlooker or spectator makes a very good commentary after the fact.

"If that clumsy oaf didn't make that move he would have won the game," is a natural comment from spectators.

The person who's directly involved in the activity has a different perspective from the one who's just watching.

But this is not to say that the commanders of the government troops that had cornered the bandits inside the town's Catholic Church and later in a nearby hospital should be forgiven for the bandits' escape.

Field commanders should take the blame for the failure of their men in the same way that they take credit for the success of an endeavor undertaken by their subordinates even if they didn't take part in the activity.

In olden times, field commanders whose troops were defeated in battle were beheaded. Other commanders who were disgraced committed suicide.

I'm not saying the field commanders in Basilan should be killed or should commit suicide for the failure of the operation. The least they could have done was to ask higher headquarters for their relief. They had to wait for their superiors to yank them out of their posts.

By the way, why are the Marines not deployed in the fighting in Basilan?

I understand only one Marine company—about 120 men—attached to the Army is being used in Basilan to go after the Abu Sayyaf bandits.

Allegedly lacking direction from their headquarters, the Marine company is practically lost. The Marines are not comfortable receiving orders from Army officers. Although they know the terrain better than their comrades in the Army do, they cannot question the wrong tactics allegedly employed by Army officers.

It would be better if the military

high command employed the battalion or brigade-sized Marine units in the Basilan fighting. A battalion is composed of, at the very least, 300 officers and men. Two to three battalions compose a brigade.

The Marines are not only better fighters than their counterparts in the Army. They have mastery of the Basilan terrain; they know every nook and cranny of the island province.

For many years, the Marines were assigned in Basilan and Sulu. When they were in Basilan and Sulu, they had complete control of the situation. Yes, troubles erupted in those places but the Marines, who are veteran fighters, immediately quelled them. As one Marine officer boasted: "Fighting is the reason for our existence."

Three Marine brigades are now deployed in Central Mindanao: in Lanao and Maguindanao, site of Camp Abubakar, headquarters of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which they captured in heavy fighting last year.

The Marines are being used to guard Camp Abubakar and other former MILF satellite camps. They are not used to being idle and are itching to see action in Basilan.

If the Marines, and not Army troops, had cornered the Abu Sayyaf bandits in Lamitan, the fight would have been over by now.

Why are the Marines not being used in Basilan, and why are they lying idle instead in captured MILF camps?

The answer is "militics" or military politics.

Most of the top honchos in the Armed Forces come from the Army. It's only natural because the Army is the biggest force among the three service commands of the Armed Forces. The other major commands are the Navy and Air Force.

The Philippine Marine Corps is just part of the Navy. Its number is a little more than an Army division, which is composed of 10,000 men.

The Army top honchos who hold high positions in the AFP don't want the service command to which they belong to be upstaged by a unit, which is just a part of another service command.

Militics should be set aside in crushing the Abu Sayyaf.

## Valenzuela woman abducted by men in bonnets slain

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

THE BODY of a 59-year-old woman who was abducted on June 3 was found floating in Manila Bay in Navotas on Monday.

The body of Magdalena Nuñez, of Pulo Balangkas, Valenzuela, was found floating about 4 p.m. off Fatima Leongson Extension in Barangay San Roque, Navotas, police said.

She had been shot in the back of the left ear, with the bullet exiting her right cheek, said PO3 Rafael Espadera.

Navotas police suspect that the woman was killed either because her family failed to pay the P500,000 ransom her kidnappers demanded, or she failed to remit the money she allegedly owed the drug lords.

Police said they later learned that Nuñez used to be a drug pusher.

Her daughter Cristy told investigators that five men wearing bonnets and

who were on board a private jeep abducted her mother from their house about 9:30 p.m. Sunday.

Minutes later, the kidnappers called the victim's family using Nuñez's cellular phone and demanded P500,000 for her release, police said.

The daughter told the suspects her family could not raise that amount, so the ransom was reduced to P200,000. Negotiations for the woman's release lasted 30 minutes, police said.

When the family failed to raise the ransom, the suspects called the daughter for the last time about 10 p.m. and told her they would kill Nuñez, police said.

Monday afternoon, Nuñez's body was found.

Cristy told PO3 Espadera that a week before the abduction, men wearing the uniform of the Malabon police interrogated her mother.

Cristy also admitted to police that her mother used to sell illegal drugs.

## THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, June 7, 2001  
9th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading:

Gospel:

A teacher of the Law had been listening to this discussion and admired how Jesus answered them. So he came up and asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?"

Jesus answered, "The first is: Hear, Israel! The Lord, our God, is One Lord; and you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. And after this comes another one: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these two."

The teacher of the Law said to him, "Well spoken, Master; you are right when you say that he is one and there is no other. To love him with all our heart, with all our understanding and with all our strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves is more important than any burnt offering or sacrifice."

Jesus approved this answer and said, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." But after that, no one dared to ask him any more questions.

Commentary

It has been said that "to love" is a command, something that we are obliged to do because God commands us to. This is ridiculous! Obviously, people with this kind of thinking have not had the least experience of "loving." Isn't it true that love is a profound feeling, not skin-deep, which captivates the whole being of the person? Love is never imposed, it does not come from outside; rather it is a force that springs from within, inspiring us to work for the good of the other person or persons. It can not be stopped. It can not be controlled. It stems from a genuine encounter with the other. One's relationship with God and with people is not based on any form of command or norms, but on love.

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## SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

**REMEDIAL LAW (SPECIAL PROCEEDINGS)**—Regional Trial Court acting as probate court has limited jurisdiction.—Settled is the rule that the Regional Trial Court acting as a probate court exercises but limited jurisdiction, thus it has no power to take cognizance of and determine the issue of title to property claimed by a third person adversely to the decedent, unless the claimant and all other parties having legal interest in the property consent, expressly or impliedly, to the submission of the question to the Probate Court for adjudgment, or the interests of third persons are not thereby prejudiced. The facts obtaining in this case, however, do not call for the application of the exception to the rule. It bears stress that the purpose why the probate court allowed the introduction of evidence on ownership was for the sole purpose of determining whether the subject properties should be included in the inventory which is within the probate court's competence. In fact, the probate court, aware of its limited jurisdiction declared that its determination of the ownership was merely provisional and suggested that either the administrator or the widow may commence the proper action in the Regional Trial Court. [Citations omitted.] Justice Gonzaga-Reyes, Third Division, In the Matter of the Intestate Estate of Deceased Ismael Reyes, Heirs of Oscar Reyes v. Reyes, G.R. No. 139587, November 22, 2000]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA



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| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)  | PEARL HARBOR          |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)   | PEARL HARBOR          |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY) | ANTS IN THE PANTS     |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY) | ANGEL EYES            |
| FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)     | THE MUMMY RETURNS     |
| FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)     | PEARL HARBOR          |
| FIESTA CARNIVAL             | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| NEW FRONTIER                | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |

**MANILA**

|          |                        |
|----------|------------------------|
| EASTERN  | CLOSED                 |
| MAXIM    | CLOSED                 |
| MIRAMAR  | BABAENG PUTIK / MALENA |
| ODEON    | PEARL HARBOR           |
| ODEON-2  | ALAS DOSE              |
| ROBEN    | CARTA ALAS             |
| TANDEM-1 | KUNG LILIGAYA KA       |
| TANDEM-2 | ALIPIN NG TUKSO        |
| TIMES    | LOST "HARD BULLET"     |

**QUEZON CITY**

|           |                               |
|-----------|-------------------------------|
| ACT-1     | SENSUAL ISLAND                |
| ACT-2     | KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT          |
| ACT-3     | CLOSED                        |
| ACT-4     | CLOSED                        |
| CORONET-2 | SA IYONG HAPLOS / EXIT WOUNDS |
| QUEZON-1  | PEARL HARBOR                  |
| REMAR     | PEARL HARBOR                  |
| REMAR-2   | ALAS DOSE                     |

**CUBAO**

|                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| OCEAN SUPERAMA | BABAENG PUTIK |
| OCEAN CINEMA-A | PANABLA       |
| OCEAN CINEMA-B | CRISelda      |

**MANDALUYONG CITY**

|                       |                                                       |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL | 635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70                           |
| CINEMA-1              | PEARL HARBOR                                          |
| CINEMA-2              | TRAFFIC - (JUNE 6-7) FRENCH FILM FESTIVAL (JUNE 8-18) |

**CAINTA RIZAL**

|                           |                     |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| STA. LUCIA EAST           | (681-54091 TO 19)   |
| CINEMA-1                  | HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL |
| CINEMA-2                  | CARTA ALAS          |
| CINEMA-3                  | TRAFFIC             |
| CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)  | PEARL HARBOR        |
| CINEMA-5 (DTS)            | PEARL HARBOR        |
| CINEMA-6                  | LABRADOR            |
| CINEMA-7                  | SPY KIDS            |
| CINEMA-8                  | CUT-AWAY            |
| CINEMA-9 (DTS)            | THE MUMMY RETURNS   |
| CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | PEARL HARBOR        |
| CINEMA-11 (SDDS)          | PEARL HARBOR        |
| CINEMA-12                 | ANTS IN THE PANTS   |
| CINEMA-14                 | ANGEL EYES          |
| CINEMA-15                 | ALAS DOSE           |

**LORES**

|          |        |
|----------|--------|
| CINEMA-2 | CLOSED |
| CINEMA-3 | CLOSED |

**POWER PLANT CINEMA**

|          |                   |
|----------|-------------------|
| CINEMA-1 | TRAFFIC           |
| CINEMA-2 | PEARL HARBOR      |
| CINEMA-3 | PEARL HARBOR      |
| CINEMA-4 | THE MUMMY RETURNS |
| CINEMA-5 | ANGEL EYES        |
| CINEMA-6 | PEARL HARBOR      |

**UNIWIDE METROMALL**  
(LAS PINAS)  
CINEMA-1 BAIT  
CINEMA-2 KATAWAN  
CINEMA-4 ANG GUSTO KO SA LALAKE

**UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL**  
(PARANAQUE)  
CINEMA-1 SWEET NOVEMBER  
CINEMA-2 MASARAP HABANG MAINIT  
CINEMA-4 WANTED G.R.O

**PEARL HARBOR**  
(PG-13 R.T. 3.00)  
Action/Adventure/Thriller/Romance  
Starring:  
Ben Affleck  
Josh Hartnett  
Katie Beckinsale  
Cuba Gooding Jr.  
Alec Baldwin  
William Lee Scott  
Jon Voight  
June 7 - Thursday  
5:00 PM - Closed (LFP Foundation / SMART)  
8:00 PM - Pearl Harbor  
12:00 PM - Pearl Harbor  
GET A COPY OF the 4th issue of  
Pearl Harbor: A Journal of Philippine  
Cinema featuring  
WOMEN IN CHINA  
LFP Foundation Inc.  
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Long (Opposite Lungsod ng Lungsod)  
Manila City, Tel. no. 7661-20-10  
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**MTV honors best videos**

MTV Philippines presents MTV Pilipinas 2001, an event that honors the best in music video-making in the country, tomorrow night, June 8 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel.

Awards are for best new artist, best group, best male, best female, best song, best director and best video.

New artist Kyla leads the group of nominees with five nominations including one for best new artist and best video.

Longtime favorite Parokya ni Edgar follows with four nominations and new group Slapshock, Gary Valenciano and singer-actress Jessa Zaragoza follow with three nominations.

Other nominees are Chico Science, Teeth, Eraserheads, Ogie Alcasid, Battery, Radioactive Sago Project, Kaya, Side A, Francis M., Mo Twister, Victoria, Regine Velasquez and Lani Misalucha.

MTV Pilipinas 2001 will premiere on MTV Philippines Channel 41 on June 24, 1 p.m. Featured performers are Vina Morales, Ana Fegi, Battery, Teeth, Parokya ni Edgar, Mark Abaya, Rico Blanco, Buddy Zabala and Tirso Rapol.

The show will be hosted by MTV VJs Donita Rose, KC Montero, Belinda and Sarah.

Presenters include Barbie Almalbis, Epy Quizon, Jinky Vidal, Jet Pangan, Jun Lupito, Randy Ortiz, Ogie Alcasid, Vina Morales, Jim Paredes, Erik Matti, Yam Laranas and Boy Abunda.

Sian Ju Tan, editorial advisor of MTV Philippines and one of those who conceptualized MTV Pilipinas 2001 says: "All the categories in this year's awards do not only have a nice mix of veteran talent running head-to-head with newcomers, but there is a wide range of concepts and styles both creatively and technically."

Nominees for MTV Pilipinas 2001 were chosen through a poll of select people from the music industry and label companies, while winners for best new artist, best group, best male, best female and best song were voted by fans.

Winners for best director and best video were chosen by the initial set of judges who participated in the nomination process. Voting process took place from May 5 to May 25.

Replays of the show will be aired June 24 at 8 p.m., June 30 at 1 p.m. and June 30 at 8 p.m.

**LOUIE'S CINEMA**  
NOW SHOWING  
**PEARL HARBOR**  
(PG-13 R.T. 3.00)  
Action/Adventure/Thriller/Romance  
Starring:  
Ben Affleck  
Josh Hartnett  
Katie Beckinsale  
Cuba Gooding Jr.  
Alec Baldwin  
William Lee Scott  
Jon Voight  
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# ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

## Angelina Jolie makes cyberbabe come to life

IN her previous films, Angelina Jolie has carved a niche for herself by playing exotic leading ladies with a lot of passion and edginess to them. In her next starrer, however, she plays completely against type. And yet, her new film, "Tomb Raider" could be the vehicle she needs to propel her to mainstream superstardom.

In "Tom Raider," Jolie is the living embodiment of videogame animated heroine Lara Croft. The popular cyberbabe is a British heiress who goes on dangerous expeditions all over the world.

At first, Lara was happy living an adventurous socialite's life. But after she survives a plane crash, she realizes that the frivolous games of the fabulously wealthy are not for her.

So, she commits herself to discovering important archaeological treasures and winning awards as a photojournalist. Of course, she also manages to give a lot of bad buys

### VIEWFINDER



Nestor U. Torre

their just desserts in the process!

Now that Jolie has made Lara Croft come alive onscreen, both their lives will never be the same again. Aside from the film, Croft will be further marketed by way of a music single and an animated TV series.

For her part, Jolie has had to reinvent herself as a performer to do justice to the role. Before shooting the film, she put in many months of physical training so she could do her own stunts in "Tomb Raider" and still come out in one piece.

What's the film about? Lara is

in pursuit of the "Achilles Shield" in Asia and Antarctica when she has to contend with an old nemesis of her father's (played by Jon Voight, Jolie's real-life dad).

The plot may be slim, but the action, exotic locales and special effects energize "Tomb Raider." Incidentally, the production affected Jolie in other ways as well. Shooting in Cambodia's Angkor Wat complex of ancient temples, she discovered a more spiritual side to her that she never thought she had.

And the sight of the poverty and tragedy in Cambodia made her realize that she could put her celebrity status to more purposive use.

That's why her next film is "Beyond Borders," directed by no less than Oliver Stone, and she's playing a relief worker who dedicates her life to helping refugees.

As for her private life, Jolie has been linked to Timothy Hutton and

Antonio Banderas. She was first married to British actor Jonny Lee Miller, but the union broke up soon after.

Her second marriage, to actor-director Billy Bob Thornton, looked like it would last forever, because the couple looked so passionate and madly in love, but it's also reported to be on the rocks.

### TV treats

THURSDAY, June 7 at 5 p.m. on Channel V Int'l., "Plus One in Asia" features the popular boy band in performance. Plus One was recently in Manila to promote its album, "The promise."

At 7 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, "Lionheart" is about the youngest person to sail solo, non-stop, around the world.

At 9:30 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, "African Ascent" is about the conquest of the majestic volcanic spires of the Mandara mountains in the

Cameroons.

At 10 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, "The Whale Shark Hunters" goes to the Philippines and Baja California in Mexico.

Friday, June 8 at 5:30 p.m. on Star Movies, "Barney's Great Adventure" stars George Hearn and Shirley Douglas.

At 6 p.m. on the National Geo-

graphic Network, "Making Water Work" focuses on China's Three Gorges Dam.

At 8 p.m. on Viva Cinema, "Tupang Itim" topples Jess Lapid Jr. and Tetchie Agbayani.

Saturday, June 9 at 7:15 p.m. on Star Movies, "The Sixth Sense" stars Bruce Willis, Toni Collette and Haley Joel Osment.

## Michael: I've broken too many promises to Gina

NO MATTER how bad a marriage has become, separations are never easy. It is even harder for the men because they usually keep their feelings bottled up. It takes a lot of effort for them to own up to their shortcomings.

Michael de Mesa is man enough to admit that the latest breakup with his wife Gina Alajar is his fault. He has been honest about his dishonesty. If only for that, you can't totally call him the bad guy.

For the very first time, Michael talks about his final separation from Gina. He ditched his rough and tough image and let his soft side show.

Dolly: Gina and you have been married for more than half your life. You break up and break up over and over again. How is this separation different from the previous ones?

Michael: This time there's no third party. Before, I always had another woman and when the affair did not work out I'd realize I was wrong and I'd go back to Gina. I used to be the one who left. Now she's the one who left me.

I'm not saving face here. I turned her into the kind of wife she is now. Maybe it's mid-life crisis. Our last separation was a long time ago. Since 1987 when I became Born Again and surrendered my life to the Lord we had not separated until now. Nagbago talaga ako. I'm no saint, though, that's why nag-backslide ako. I have not turned my back on the Lord. Just on some Christians who are too judgmental. The holier-than-thou types.

D: So all those stories linking you to VJ Nadya Hutagalung, Maegan Aguilar and your Singaporean costar in "Rent" re not true at all?

M: As show iz as it may sound, they are just my good friends. Nadya has a live-in boyfriend, Brian, and Maegan is so in love with her boyfriend. Barkada lang kami. Since Nadya is a foreigner she's more expressive and affectionate which some Pinoys misinterpret. In fact, when she found out that she was being blamed for my split with Gina, she wanted to talk to Gina but I told her it was pointless. I've broken too many promises to Gina so I can't blame her for

### DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal



not trusting me anymore. Para akong the boy who cried wolf. I've caused her too much pain. Nahihiya na akong mag-sorry. Ang hirap lang, now every girl I'm seen with will be linked to me. I wish people would just let me be.

D: Would you say this separation is final? Are you and Gina talking about annulment?

M: I really can't say but it seems final. Gina asked me about an annulment already but I don't see myself remarrying so I don't see the need for an annulment.

We're both emotionally drained as it is. I'm not yet looking that far. I live by the line in "Rent"—no day but today! D: Personally I feel that when there are still shouting matches, a word war, banging of doors, it's not really over yet. There's still passion left. But when you just walk away silently then there's a tone of finality. Was it that way between Gina and you?

M: Come to think of it, this separation is not as dramatic as the ones before. I even attempted to commit suicide before and sent her a goodbye letter. Of course, di maiwasan na may konting sagutan. The problem is when she starts interrogating me, I clam up. I guess all men don't like to be pressured.

D: After a separation, one goes through several stages. Do you know where your heart is right now?

M: My heart is in limbo. I'm confused, lonely, though I refuse to be affected by it. I guess I'm in denial. I usually just lock myself up in my room, watch TV and eat. Friends ask me if I'm depressed and I say I don't know.

D: How are your three sons (Ryan, Jeffrey, AJ) taking it?

M: They're all grown-up. I told them I've hurt their mom too much. Kinakamusta ko siya parati every time I call up the boys. We don't talk about the details. Men don't say much. I guess our sons respect us both so they don't ask questions.

D: When was the

last time you saw Gina?

M: When I got my stuff from our place to move to Cherie's condo unit (His sister Cherie Gil is now based in Italy with her violinist husband Roni and their kid. They're relocating to Spain soon). We were civil with each other. Although there was one meeting that will remain vivid in my memory. It was the day before I went back to Singapore and we were still trying to work it out after the VJ Nadya issue was blown out of proportion. She made me promise not to see Nadya while I was in Singapore and I really kept my promise. All I

needed was time and space. She and our sons dropped by my shooting and when I watched them walk away my heart was crushed. I cried to her on the phone that night.

During my birthday last week, she texted me. "Happy Birthday. Happiness always." And I texted back, "Happiness always to you, too." Ganon lang. Her birthday is coming up soon but I'll be in the States. D: Speaking of the States, what happened to your plans to relocate there?

M: Gina and I have been wanting to move to the US but we were saving up for it. When we were abroad we were happier. Maybe because we were not under public scrutiny there. Last year, Gina and I had a very memorable experience in California. I'll always remember that fondly. (Sorry, Michael requested me to keep it a secret. I

agree that it was an extraordinary thrill that not all couples would have a chance to experience).

D: Do you think that any other woman would put up with you as much as Gina did?

M: (Sighs) Tough question. I don't think so. She knows me like a book. We've been together for 27 years. We lived in for three years and have been married for 24 years. I give it to Gina. All this time she has been so supportive and faithful. Ako ang gago.

D: So why go on looking for something you already found? Are you looking for something else or something more?

M: Gee, I don't know. The problem is when I'm in, I want out and when I'm not with her and the boys, I want to be in again. She told me she feels the same way. She must really, really love me because she gave me back what I want now, my freedom.

### South Border in Pampanga

Catch South Border live in Mr. Golf on McArthur Highway in San Fernando, Pampanga on Saturday, June 9. The show is produced by Paul Ramos and Catherine Gutierrez. Project coordinator is GP Panglilan. Tickets are available at the gate.

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BEN AFFLECK KATE BECKINSALE JOSH HARTNETT

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|                                                                    |                                                                |                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b><br>TRAFFIC - P 13<br>1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00              | <b>2</b><br>PEARL HARBOR - P 13<br>11:00, 2:30, 5:00, 9:30     | <b>3</b><br>PEARL HARBOR - P 13<br>11:40, 3:10, 6:40, 10:10 |
| <b>4</b><br>MUMMY RETURNS - P 13<br>11:30, 2:10, 4:50, 7:30, 10:10 | <b>5</b><br>ANGEL EYES - P 13<br>1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00 | <b>6</b><br>PEARL HARBOR - P 13<br>12:20, 3:50, 7:20, 10:50 |

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**PEARL HARBOR**

A JERRY BRUCKHEIMER PRODUCTION  
A MICHAEL BAY FILM

SOUNDTRACK FEATURES THE NEW SINGLE "THERE YOU'LL BE" by FAITH HILL

Distributed by BUENA VISTA INTERNATIONAL thru COLUMBIA PICTURES



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Honda Engines  
**HONDA**

THURSDAY,  
JUNE 7, 2001

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

B1

# BUSINESS

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ■ CORRIE S. NARISMA, Assistant Editor

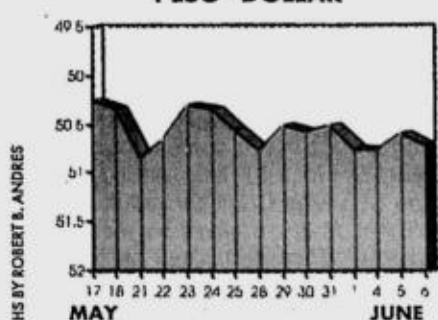
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## Gov't to overhaul PNB rehab plan

### INDICATORS

#### CURRENCIES

##### PESO - DOLLAR



GRAPHS BY ROBERT B. ANDRES

##### Peso-Dollar Rate

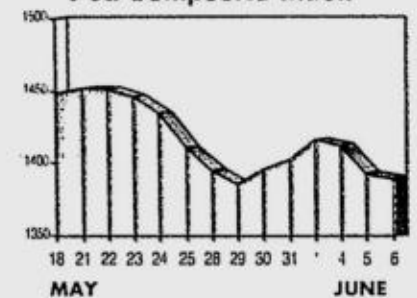
**P50.72 = \$1**  
As of 5 p.m.,  
June 6, 2001

**Y120.52 = \$1**  
The US dollar was trading  
at 120.52 as of 5 p.m.,  
June 6, 2001

**GOLD:\$266.90/267.40**  
per ounce Hong Kong,  
June 6, 2001

#### STOCK MARKET

##### PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B6)

#### Shares end lower

SHARES inched lower at the close of trading yesterday, as foreign selling weighed on select blue chips, traders said.

Ending above its 1,370-point trendline support, the 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index lost 3.19 points, or 0.2 percent, to 1,389.52, adding to Tuesday's 1.4-percent loss.

Dragging down the index was blue-chip Ayala Land, which dipped five centavos at P4.60 on foreign selling.

"Foreign investors continue to get out of the market," BPI Securities assistant vice president Spencer Yap told Dow Jones Newswires, noting that the weak global economic outlook and security concerns in the Philippines continue to bog down market sentiment.

An attack on five US military personnel in a northern Philippine province by suspected communist guerillas Tuesday, coupled with the unresolved kidnapping crisis in Basilan, has sidelined most investors, causing a lackluster session, traders said.

Yap said as long as foreign selling continues, the market is expected to remain weak and locked in a tight range, between 1,370 and 1,400 points.

Despite the bearish sentiment in the market, local investors found reason to position in select issues at the center of corporate rumors, said Eagle Equities president Joseph Roxas.

C&P Homes rose two centavos, or 6.3 percent, at 34 centavos, as investors speculated that real estate giant Ayala Land might raise its 11.6-percent stake in the low-cost housing concern in the future.

The stake was transferred to Ayala Land last Friday to refund Ayala's P172-million deposit made for several properties it wanted to purchase from C&P shareholder Fine Properties. The property sale never materialized. **AP**

#### Banks buck ASB rehab

CREDITOR-BANKS of property developer Luke Roxas' ASB Group of Companies have asked a hearing panel of the Securities and Exchange Commission to reconsider the decision approving the proposed rehabilitation of the cash-strapped group.

In separate motions filed with the SEC this week, Bank of the Philippine Islands, China Banking Corp. and United Coconut Planters Bank also asked the SEC panel to dismiss the ASB group's petition for rehabilitation.

Chinabank noted that by forcing creditors to accept certain properties as payment for the ASB group's outstanding obligations and compelling secured creditors to surrender present collateral, the Commission was altering the terms of contracts validly entered into between the parties concerned.

The banks added that the order reiterated their contention that the rehab plan was based on unrealistic assumptions and that the market value of the properties offered in exchange for present collateral was not sufficient to cover the existing obligations of ASB Realty Corp.

The SEC, through a three-member hearing panel, approved in late April the proposed rehabilitation plan for the distressed ASB group, which had liabilities of more than P12 billion.

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE MACAPAGAL administration will draw up a new rehabilitation plan for Philippine National Bank that will focus on the settlement of P13.3 billion worth of loans owed by the government.

PNB chair Norberto Nazareno said a P15-billion emergency loan by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas would be used to settle the remaining government debts in the country's sixth largest bank.

"The old rehab program (focused on a fresh capital infusion) will be scrapped," said Nazareno, who is also chair of Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.

PDIC similarly extended a P10-billion emergency loan to PNB last October and only half of this amount will be converted into government equity to more than double the government's ownership in PNB from 16 percent.

The original rehab plan that the BSP and PNB had drafted last year called for a capital infusion from its stockholders, principally taipan Lucio Tan who owns 67 percent of the bank. Tan infused P10 billion last September but the re-capitalization proved insufficient.

### Investments post net inflow in May

FOREIGN "hot money" still posted a net outflow of \$13.6 million in the first five months of the year although the volume of outbound funds drastically slid by 96.3 percent from a net outflow of \$369.3 million in the same period last year.

Based on documents furnished by four custodian banks to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, the level of portfolio investments in May alone even painted an improved sentiment among investors as \$88.8 million worth of inflow outpaced outflow of \$81.5 million.

A bank analyst said the May turnout in portfolio investments after three consecutive months of outflow was a reflection that foreign investors were generally satisfied with the results of the recent national elections.

From February to April, hot money registered a net outflow of \$13.7 million, \$19.4 million, and \$19.2 million following a net inflow of \$31.4 million in January, most of which came in the last week after the Macapagal administration had taken over on Jan. 20.

The government will thus have to convert a portion of the P25 billion in emergency loans into equity.

"We should not go beyond 51 percent," Nazareno said, noting that increasing state equity in PNB to such a level would only be problematic because the bank would be covered by the Commission on Audit.

Nazareno said the government would issue promissory notes to the BSP as an assurance that the debt would be settled at a later date.

He said the yield of the promissory notes would carry a premium of 1.5 percentage points over the 91-day treasury bill rate.

The PNB chair explained that even the remaining P5-billion loan of PDIC to the bank could be used to pay part of the P13.3 billion in advances which included a P5-billion loan to imports inspector SGS and to sugar trader Nasutra.

Nazareno said PNB and the government would still determine the exact amount of state obligations that have become part of the bank's huge non-performing loans.

Based on a recent audit of Price WaterhouseCoopers, PNB's bad loans had swelled to 50 percent of its total loan portfolio, eroding its book value to only P40

per share from the current P60.

This developed as the bank yesterday said it recorded a net loss of P2.5 billion in the January-April period on net interest loss of P338 million.

PNB said its loss for the period is attributable to provision for probable losses, interest on its loans from the central bank

and the state deposit insurance firm, and litigation expenses.

Provisions for probable losses reached P865 million in the four-month period while interest on government borrowings amounted to P1.03 billion. Litigation expenses and spending for acquired assets amounted to P459 million.

### Foreigners top brokers' list

FOREIGN brokerage houses continued to take the lion's share of the shrinking business offered by the local stock market.

Data from the Philippine Stock Exchange showed that from January to May this year, 15 of the top 20 brokers in terms of market value turnover were foreign brokerage houses while only five local houses made it to the list.

However, brokers said that the higher overhead costs of foreign brokerage houses still made them more vulnerable to the drought in the stock market.

During the first five months of the year, the total value turnover in the PSE stood at only P157.95 billion, representing a 60.85-percent contraction from the P403.55 billion turnover during the same period last year.

Merrill Lynch Securities Philippines Inc. stood as the country's No. 1 broker in terms

of market transaction, accounting for 7.9 percent of the total value turnover.

Jardine Fleming Exchange Capital Sec. Inc. ranked No. 2 with a 6.47-percent market share, followed by ABN Amro Asia Securities, ING Barings, and Regis Partners Inc. UBS Warburg Securities ranked sixth with a share of 4.71 percent.

There were only two local brokerage houses in the top 10—UCPB Securities Inc. at 7th and BPI Securities Corp. at 10th.

CLSA Philippines Inc. stood as the 8th top broker with a market share of 3.27 percent and HSBC Securities Phils. Inc. was 9th with 3.16 percent.

The three other local brokerage houses which made it to the top 20 were Abacus Securities Corp. (11th), AsiaSec Equities Inc. (16th) and Goldstar Securities Inc. (20th).



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**FINANCE FOR SENIOR EXECUTIVES PROGRAM**  
JULY 23 - AUGUST 10, 2001

**Make strategic decisions in today's crisis environment, guided by clear understanding and appreciation of financial concepts.**

In the current economic environment, every executive must understand financial concepts and be able to apply them fully to corporate strategy formulation and implementation. The stewardship of corporate resources is no longer the sole accountability of the Finance Director. Effective sourcing and utilization of resources is every executive's responsibility.

This Finance for Senior Executives Program provides Senior Executives from a variety field of specializations, with an understanding of financial concepts and tools to become an effective member of a corporate executive committee operating in today's global environment.

**The Program content encompasses:**

- Investing in the Business**
  - Developing guidelines for resource allocation; payback, return on investment, hurdle rates
  - Management of financial impact of project/program/operating risks

- Raising Funds for the Business**
  - Determining capital requirements
  - Sources and cost of capital: debt versus equity financing
  - Creating shareholder value: What is it? What affects it?
  - Managing financial and market risks (interest rates and currency risks) among others

- Finance in Strategy Implementation and Operating Management**
  - Strategic business units: structures that create results
  - Governance: the effect of financial policies on supplier, employee, and customer behavior; the management of day-to-day operations through financial policies and control systems
  - Management reporting: What numbers do you need to watch? Do you need product line reporting?

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**Prof. Errol Perez, Program Director**

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| <b>CONSTRUCTION/DESIGN</b><br><br>Construct/Renovate<br>FREE Cost Estimate<br>0919-2516860 T-9132059                               | Grindl bnew 3br 2M 9487112                                                                                                                                                   | Antipolo V/L 5300m² Cheap<br>w/Fruit Trees • 643-5313               | Antipolo City Proper Coml<br>1766m² v.nice 658-2115/16                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>LOAN &amp; MORTGAGE</b><br><br>2 % w/out taking Car 3670169                               | <b>RESORT</b><br><br>BF Resort VIII Las Pinas<br>276m² @ P5500 874-9075                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>CLUB SHARE &amp; MEMBERSHIP</b><br><br>Fontana Class C 3BR P280T<br>531-6682; 09197065297                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
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Republic of the Philippines  
**Department of Health  
CENTER FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT  
METRO MANILA**

Wallerville Compound, Brgy. Addition Hills, Mandaluyong City  
Tel. Nos. 718-3095, 718-3098, 718-3097, 718-3098

**INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID**

The Center for Health Development (CHD) for Metro Manila is inviting bids from pre-qualified contractor of Inter-Agency Committee classified as Small B/Class C for the Proposed Construction of Pilot Water Analysis Laboratory Building located at Basco, Batanes and Proposed Construction of Four (4) units Public Toilet located at the following municipality (a) Basco - two (2) units; (b) Iwona - one (1) unit; and (c) Sabtang - one (1) unit, all in the Province of Batanes. Pre-C forms shall be made available to contractors classified as above upon submission of letter of intent and latest PCAB license from June 7 to June 13, 2001 at the Office of the Chairman, RIBAC, Center for Health Development for Metro Manila, Wallerville Compound, Mandaluyong City.

Deadline for submission of duly accomplished pre-qualification statement shall not be later than 5:00 PM of June 13, 2001. The RIBAC shall post the Pre-Qualified Pre-Disqualified contractor on June 20, 2001 at the Center for Health Development for Metro Manila Bulletin Board. The Pre-Bid Conference shall be held on July 2, 2001 at the Office of the Chairman RIBAC, Center for Health Development for Metro Manila.

Dates for the issuance of Bid/Tender Documents for Pre-Qualified Contractors, Submission of Bids and Opening are as follows:

1. Issuance of Bid/Tender Documents - June 26, 2001
2. Submission of Bids (2:30 PM) - July 11, 2001
3. Opening of Bids (2:45 PM) - July 11, 2001

The submission and opening of bids to be held at the Office of the Chairman, RIBAC, Center for Health Development for Metro Manila, Wallerville Compound, Mandaluyong City. Complete set of bid/tender documents may be purchased by interested pre-qualified contractor upon payment of non-refundable fee on TWO THOUSAND (P2,000.00) Pesos only.

The Center for Health Development for Metro Manila reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality and award the contract to any bidder whose proposal are evaluated by RIBAC is the most advantageous to the government. The Center for Health Development for Metro Manila assures no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expense of loss that may be incurred in the preparations of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) PURITA S. DANGA, MD, MPH, CESO IV  
Director III  
Chairman, RIBAC

(PDI - June 7, 9 & 13, 2001)

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ONLINE**

Republic of the Philippines  
**SENATE**  
Pasay City

**INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID**

The Senate of the Philippines invites all eligible bidders to prequalify and to bid for the year 2002 services to wit:

**A. PUBLIC BIDDING**

1. Subscription to Local/Int'l Newspapers and Magazines Journals and Reviews
2. Rental of Shuttle Bus
3. Housekeeping
4. HMO
5. Preventive Maintenance of Computers and Peripherals
6. Rental of Copier Machines
7. Canteen Concessioning/Catering
8. Senate Uniform
9. Internet Subscription
10. Timekeeping System

**B. SEALED BIDDING**

1. Pest Control
2. Sanitizers/Deodorizers
3. Supply of Flowers
4. Rental of Drinking Fountains
5. Cooling Tower Water Treatment Program
6. Supply of Gasoline
7. Subscription to Cable TV
8. Garbage Disposal

Prospective bidders for the PUBLIC BIDDING may obtain the prequalification requirements at the PBAC Secretariat Office, Room 401, Senate of the Philippines, GSIS Building, Pasay City from 13-22 June 2001. Deadline for the submission of complete and duly accomplished prequalification documents shall be on 6 July 2001. Incomplete requirements will not be entertained. The pre-bidding conferences and bidding schedules shall be announced to all prequalified bidders.

All bids under the public bidding category must be accompanied by a bid bond equivalent to five percent (5%) of the total bid price or Php 10,000 whichever is higher in the form of cash, manager's check, cashier's check or surety bond. All surety bonds must be callable on demand. Late bids will be rejected.

Bidders participating in the SEALED BIDDING may secure requirements from the Property and Procurement Services (PPS) located at Room 401, Senate of the Philippines, Pasay City from 13-22 June 2001. Schedule of conferences for services under the same category will be announced later including the deadline for the dropping of bids.

Winning bidders from both categories shall post a performance bond in the form of cash, manager's check, cashier's check or surety bond equivalent to fifteen percent (15%) of the total contract price. For prepaid contracts the performance bond shall be equivalent to one hundred percent (100%).

THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES RESERVES THE RIGHT TO CONFISCATE THE BID BOND AND/OR PURSUE APPROPRIATE LEGAL ACTION SHOULD THE WINNING BIDDERS REFUSE TO ACCEPT THEIR AWARD, AND TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS OR ANY PART THEREOF WITHOUT OFFERING ANY REASON, WAIVE ANY DEFECTS CONTAINED THEREIN, AND ACCEPT THE OFFER MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE GOVERNMENT.

FURTHER, THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES ASSUMES NO OBLIGATION WHATSOEVER TO COMPENSATE OR INDEMNIFY THE BIDDER FOR ANY EXPENSE OR LOSS THAT THEY MAY INCUR IN PARTICIPATING TO THIS UNDERTAKING NOR DOES IT GUARANTEE THAT AN AWARD WILL BE MADE.

(Sgd.) ATTY. ARNEL JOSE S. BAÑAS  
Chairman, Prequalification, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - June 7, 8 & 11, 2001)

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES  
Diliman, Quezon City

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

**INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID**

The University of the Philippines - Diliman Bids & Awards Committee (BAC) invites interested contractors to submit their prequalification documents for the Infrastructure Construction & Renovation Projects of UP Diliman for the calendar year 2001. Only licensed contractors (at least Category C) with IAC registration will be accepted. Specialty contractors for Landscaping, Electrical, Waterproofing, Communication and other Infrastructure specialty works will also be prequalified as separate groups. Contractors who are eligible will be invited to bid on the following Projects:

**PROJECT TITLE**

1. AMOR Projects, NSRI, MBB
2. Coll. of Architecture Bldg. 1, Phase 2
3. Proposed Faculty Lounge and Store Room, CSSP
4. College of Music Annex Bldg., Phase 2
5. Completion of EEE Bldg., Coll. Of Engineering
6. Computer Laboratory, CSSP Dept. of Euro. Languages
7. Proposed Gutter and Downspouts at Bocobo Hall
8. Construction of Fence, FLCD/CDC, CHE
9. NIP Building, Phase 1-8, Institute of Physics
10. CSWCD Bldg., Phase 4-B
11. Electrical Power for ACUs, Math Building
12. Installation of Vinyl Floor Tiles, NSRI
13. Power Supply for Workstations, College of Law
14. Proposed Waiting Shed, Film Center
15. Proposed Water Supply Sys. @ Bolinao Project, MSI
16. Renovation of MBA Classrooms, CBA
17. Repair of Gymnasium Roof, CHK
18. Renovation of Toilet & Kitchenette, CBA
19. Retiling of Floors at Lobby and Corridors of Malcolm Hall
20. Renov. of Toilets and Rehab. of Plumbing Sys., Malcolm Hall
21. Rewiring & Rehab. of Electrical System of Benton Hall
22. Repainting of Interiors, Malcolm Hall, College of Law
23. Site Works, UP Mindanao Guest House
24. SOLAIR Bldg., Phase 3
25. Structural Crack Repair, Inst of Chemistry
26. Structured Cabling System: AIT Building
27. Structured Cabling System: College of Fine Arts & DIO
28. Structured Cabling System: Community Affairs Building
29. Structured Cabling System: CWS
30. Structured Cabling System: Engineering Library Building
31. Structured Cabling System: German Yia Hall
32. Structured Cabling System: Gonzales Hall
33. Structured Cabling System: Melchor Hall
34. Structured Cabling System: New CSWCD Building
35. Structured Cabling System: Office of Admissions
36. Structured Cabling System: OVCRD @ PHIVOLCS Bldg.
37. Structured Cabling System: Palma Hall
38. Structured Cabling System: PNB Bldg, UPHS
39. Structured Cabling System: SOLAIR Building
40. Structured Cabling System: Virata Hall
41. Structured Cabling System: Virata Hall
42. Upgrading of Electrical Entrance, Bocobo Hall
43. Upgrading of Electrical Entrance, Bocobo Hall
44. Various Renovation Works @ Albert Hall, MBB
45. Various Renovation Works @ Albert Hall, MBB
46. Various Renovation Works, UPHS

Prequalification forms are now available at the Office of the Campus Architect (OCA), Coral Building, Lakandula Street corner De los Reyes Street, UP-Diliman, Quezon City, upon payment of P200.00. Please call 920-5301 local 8032 / 8033 or 927-8656 for further inquiries.

A letter of intent addressed to the Chancellor through the BAC is to be submitted to the Office of the Campus Architect together with the accomplished forms. Deadline of submission of prequalification or eligibility documents is on or before 5 p.m., June 18, 2001.

The University reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any required formality in the bids received, or to accept such bids or to award any part thereof to any bidder whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to the University. The University assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify any firm for any expense or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bid proposals, nor that it guarantees that a selection will be made.

*Emerlinda R. Roman*  
EMERLINDA R. ROMAN  
Chancellor

Republika ng Pilipinas  
**Pambansang Korporasyon Sa Elektrisidad  
(NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION)**

**INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID**  
AD NO. PD 2001-30

\*Bidding Date : June 27, 2001 - 10:00 a.m.

- |            |                                                                                                                                  |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2001-29-01 | WELDING ELECTRODES/SHAFING BARS, various sizes                                                                                   |
| 2001-29-02 | CONSUMABLES FOR VARIOUS AUTOMATIC TIG WELDING MACHINES (Collet, Gas Cup, Wire Conduit/Nozzle, etc.) / FILLER WIRE, AWS ER-90S-B3 |
| 2001-29-03 | INSULATION SHEET/BEARING, various sizes                                                                                          |
| 2001-29-04 | JIGSAW/HACKSAW BLADE/DRILL/VACUUM CLEANER (Industrial Type) /CABLE CUTTER                                                        |
| 2001-29-05 | MOULD COATING, Zircon Based / RESIN BINDER                                                                                       |
| 2001-29-06 | CUT-OFF WHEEL/ROLL-MAN CASTERS                                                                                                   |
| 2001-29-07 | LIFE VEST, with Reflective Markings, Color yellow or orange                                                                      |
| 2001-29-08 | COMPUTER, Desktop                                                                                                                |
| 2001-29-09 | TIRES, tubeless, steel belted/radial tire, 185/195-R14, 8 ply                                                                    |
| 2001-29-10 | SERVICES: Supply of Labor & Materials for the Repair/Improvement of Airconditioning Unit of Pajero SDJ 465                       |
| 2001-29-11 | SERVICES: Supply of Labor for the Machining of NPC Vehicles                                                                      |
| 2001-29-12 | SERVICES: Job Order for Gear Cutting of Spur Gear, 68 teeth                                                                      |

Interested parties are invited to prequalify and to submit sealed bids on the above to be opened publicly at the Sampaguita Rm. Ground Floor, Bldg. 2, NPC-OBCC, Quezon Ave. cor. Agham Rd., Diliman, Quezon City.

Accreditation forms can be obtained from Mondays thru Fridays at the Accreditation and Bidding Support Services, Materials Management Department, Ground Floor, Bldg. 2 upon payment of P50.00, submission of company's TIN and proof of listing at the Metro Manila telephone directory. \*Deadline for submission of duly accomplished forms to participate in this bidding is on June 14, 2001.

Bidding documents available on June 6, 2001 upon payment of P50.00 which is non-refundable, presentation of original Certificate of Accreditation and supplier's number (DCE). \*Last day of issuance of bidding documents June 21, 2001.

Issuance of accreditation forms and bidding documents mornings only, 8:30 to 11:30 AM. For inquiries, please call no. 921-2574.

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation.

MATERIALS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT  
NPC-OBCC (Head Office)  
Diliman, Quezon City

(PDI - June 6 & 7, 2001)

National Power Corporation  
**Generation Company 1**  
161 Bonifacio Drive Port Area, Manila 1018

**INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID**  
(2PQ0299RCC-004)

The GENCO-1 Regional Contracts Committee (RCC) is inviting contractors to prequalify and to bid for the SUPPLY OF SECURITY SERVICES FOR THE FOLLOWING GENCO-1 PLANTS, FACILITIES AND REGIONAL OFFICES.

- |                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Schedule I - BTTP   | Schedule V - MEC/MSG |
| Schedule II - BCCPP | Schedule VI - RBO    |

Application for prequalification is open to wholly owned Filipino Private Security Agency with valid license issued by the PNP-SOSIA and with at least three (3) years experience.

Applicants may participate and prequalify for two schedules but the award of contract will be limited to one schedule. Previously prequalified agencies may maintain or choose another schedule but have to comply with the requirements, and for those who were awarded the contract for Schedules III, IV and VII will no longer be entitled in any prequalification and bidding activity.

Prequalification Forms shall be available for issuance starting June 07 to 22, 2001 at the Contracts Management Office (CMO), Third Floor, NPC GENCO-1 Building, 161 Bonifacio Drive, Port Area, Manila. Applicants shall be issued Prequalification Form upon presentation of original copy of the applicant's PNP-SOSIA License, together with the Letter of Intent and payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00) per copy.

For purposes of prequalification and bidding activities, the following schedule will be observed:

- |                                          |                |              |
|------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Submission of Prequalification Documents | June 27, 2001  | 8 AM to 6 PM |
| Issuance of Bid Documents                | July 20, 2001  | 8 AM to 5 PM |
| Pre-Bid Conference                       | July 27, 2001  | 10 AM        |
| Submission and Opening of Bids           | August 7, 2001 | 10 AM        |

The NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality therein and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is the most advantageous to the Corporation. The NPC assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that may be incurred in the preparations of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) LORNA T. DY  
Officer-in-Charge, RAFS  
And Chairman RCC

(PDI - June 7, 13 & 19 2001)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
PROVINCE OF LA UNION  
MUNICIPALITY OF SAN JUAN  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

**INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID**

The Municipality of San Juan is implementing part of the CAR for ARC, intends to prequalify and to bid for the Concrete Paving of Cacapan Barangay Road, San Juan, La Union.

| ITEM NO. | DESCRIPTION           | QUANTITY            | UNIT   |
|----------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------|
| 000      | Mobilization          | L.S.                | - S    |
|          | Burnhouse             | 23 04               | sq. m. |
| 103      | Structure Excavation  | 8,198 18            | cu. m. |
| 104      | Embankment            | 1,160 40            | cu. m. |
| 105      | Sub-Grade Preparation | 7,342 32            | cu. m. |
| 200      | Sub-Base Course       | 523 09              | cu. m. |
| 201      | Aggregate Base Course | 1,848 12            | cu. m. |
| 311      | PCCP                  | 1,785 62            | L.M.   |
| 500      | R.C. Pipe             | 60-pcs 0.45 m 0 RCP | L.M.   |
|          |                       | 28-pcs 0.60 m 0 RCP | L.M.   |
| 504      | Grouted Rip-Rap       | 1,078 04            | cu. m. |
| L.S.     | Taxes                 | 10%                 | L.S.   |
| -        | Contractor's Profit   | 10%                 | L.S.   |

**Minimum Equipment Required:**

|                                     |              |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1 unit Backhoe                      | Owned        |
| 1 unit Road Grader                  | Owned        |
| 1 unit Road Roller                  | Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit Water Truck                  | Owned        |
| 3 units Concrete Mixer (One bagger) | Owned        |
| Owner Type Jeep-Service Vehicle     | Owned        |

Pre-qualification (Pre-Q) and bidding documents may be purchased by interested eligible bidders at the Office of the Mayor, San Juan, La Union and upon payment of nonrefundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00) for each set.

Submission of application for pre-qualification must be received in sealed envelopes addressed to the Chairman, PBAC-ARCP, Municipality of San Juan, La Union not later 5:00 p.m. on June 16, 2001.

The submission and opening of bids will be on July 19, 2001. No bids will be accepted later than 10:00 a.m. The bids shall be valid for a period of 120 days after bid opening and must be accompanied by a security of 2.5% bidder's bond or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency.

The PBAC-ARCP reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive and defect of formality, assume no obligations whatsoever to compensate the bidder for any expense or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bid and accept the bid most advantageous to the government. Labor: Unskilled labor for the construction of the above mentioned project CACAPAN-ARC, San Juan, La Union will be sourced within the community.

(Sgd.) ARTURO P. VALDRIZ  
Chairman, PBAC-ARCP

(PDI - June 7, 11 & 15 2001)

**Direct selling venture  
for Zambo residents**

HOUSEWIVES, students, out-of-school youths, employees and other professionals in Zamboanga City are now earning by selling fashion jewelry and perfumes from Paris distributed by Gioielli International, Inc.

Others interested to earn a living, full-time or part-time, can also join Gioielli.

Gioielli, a top direct-seller company engaged in fashion jewelry and perfumes from France, now has several branches in strategic areas in the country. It recently held a sales rally in Zamboanga City.

The sales rally presided by Shaun Khadka, Gioielli president, was attended by several hundred business people not only in this city but also from Basilan, Tawi-Tawi, and Jolo islands and outlying areas covered by Gioielli's network in Western Mindanao.

Sonia Agustin, Gioielli Zamboanga branch office manager, attributed the success of the sales rally to hard work put up by her group directors and staff.

**Filscap songwriting  
seminar**

FILSCAP, the Filipino Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, is offering a songwriting seminar from June 9 till August 11. The modules to be taught are: basic music theory, practical theories in contemporary songwriting, music types and genres and basic arranging for songwriters, Midi and sequencing software, record production and the music business. For inquiries, call the Katha office at 433-4107/9252705. All classes will be held at the Filscap office at 1365 E. Rodriguez Senior Avenue, Quezon City. Basic music theory will be taught on June 9 and 16. Practical theories in contemporary songwriting will be taught on June 16, 23, 30 and July 7. Music types and genres and basic arranging for songwriters will be taught on June 20, July 7, 14 and 21. Midi and Music sequencing software will be taught on July 28. On August 5, the basics of record production will be taught. Lectures on the music business are scheduled on August 11.



**GOTO KING AT EDSA OPENS**

Another Goto King store has opened in Edsa corner Kamias in Quezon City, adding to its growing network of stand-alone outlets. Known as the Pinoy alternative in fastfoods, Goto King offers an all-Filipino food menu for breakfast, lunch, merienda and dinner. Open 24 hours, the outlet aims to serve commuters, students, and office workers to and from their place of work who want a quick bite of their favorite Filipino food. At the ribbon cutting ceremonies held recently were (from left) Rosario Dula Asence, Goto King consultant; Chit Juan, president of the Association of Filipino Franchisers, Inc., Lory Atienza Lina, wife of the DILG secretary, officiating priest Fr. Rafaelito Arasa, OSB and Teresa Dula Laurel, president of Goto King.



**HOMEOWNERS' INDUCTION**

The Fourth Estate Area I Homeowners Association of Fourth Estate Subdivision, Parañaque City, recently held its induction of officers with former Press Secretary Rodolfo T. Reyes, and Parañaque City acting treasurer Liberato Carabeo as guest speaker and inducting officer, respectively. Inducted were Juan A. Alegre, president; Edwin Mendoza, vice president; Franco Peñaranda, secretary; Louie Mayo, treasurer; Nelson Buñol, auditor; Francisco Rosales, PRO; Damacino San Jose, Donato Tejada, Jr. and Antonio Mendoza, directors.

INQUIRER  
**RiViA**  
By BONG BARRAMEDA

**Fit and fun**

**Q.** Who invented aerobic dancing?

**A.** Credit generally goes to Jacki Sorensen, an American dancer who conceived and developed aerobic dance as a form of physical fitness in 1971. Convinced her years of dance training had kept her fit, she choreographed dance routines, combining disco and jazz steps and calisthenics movements for a 12-week program designed to improve cardiovascular endurance.

**A Friendly Reminder.** It is quite common to believe that exercise will do you good only if it hurts—"no pain, no gain"—but this is a risky attitude to take. Experts say good exercise does involve exertion; if vigorous enough, it will make you breathless and cause sweating, and afterwards you might ache slightly. But if exercise hurts (or "burns"), or you feel exhausted for days afterwards, you are pushing yourself too far, and you could cause long-term injury. Ease off if you begin to feel pain. And, if the pain persists, don't hesitate in seeing a doctor.

**Name Game. Ben-Gay or Bengay.** The pain-reliever was created by a French pharmacist, whose name was, conveniently enough, Dr. Ben Gué. He introduced his product in France in 1898, calling it *Baume Gué* (baume is French for "balm"). When the analgesic was launched in the United States, it was decided that Americans couldn't contend with a French word like *baume*, so marketers settled for an Anglicization of its creator's name—Ben-Gay.

**Past Forward.** This day in 1940: Commonwealth President Manuel L. Quezon proclaimed Tagalog as one of the official languages of the Philippines, along with English and Spanish, effective July 4, 1946.

**WORD WATCH**

**Monoglot** (muh nuh glot) : a person knowing only one language.

PDI - June 7, 2001



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*"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened,  
 and I will give you rest."*

Matthew 11:28

## JUANITO L. CALOLOT

**President**  
**Davao Panels Enterprises, Inc.**

*Peacefully joined his Creator on June 6, 2001 at the age of 50.*

A loving husband to **Cecile Agton**

A beloved father to **Christine, Catherine, Francis Joseph and Clarice Jane**

A wonderful brother to **Luz C. Ilagan, Pat Calolot (†) and Maximo Calolot**

We, his family and all his other relatives and friends, request those whose lives had been touched by Nitoy, to pray for the repose of his soul as he is born into Eternal Life.

His remains lie in state at the Premier Chapel of Cosmopolitan Funeral Homes, Camus Ext., Davao City.

Interment will be announced later.

### Our beloved Lola Tanching ANASTASIA M. ROLDAN

*Passed away in the Grace of our Lord  
 on June 2, 2001 at the age of 87.*

Her loving daughter Ester; and son-in-law Tony Reyes; grandchildren Raquel and Nelson Tandug, Anthony and Hermie Reyes, Mark and Aileen Reyes, Aries and Tina Reyes, Rina and Robbie Azcarate, Scarlet Reyes; and her great-grandchildren Miguel, Michelle, Rowie, Red and Mai; relatives and friends mourn her passing and request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Cremation will be on Saturday, June 9, 2001, at 8:00 AM. A Mass will be held at 1:00 PM after which we request family and friends to join us going to the Acuña Family Mausoleum in Cabuyao, Laguna where she will be laid to rest.

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 with a picture  
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 to your departed  
 loved one.*

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## Marita Hbaldo Marasigan

*Widow of the late Atty. Francisco (Paquito) V. Marasigan  
 joined our Lord on June 4, 2001.*

Her bereaved children, Rose Marie and Gil (†) Favis, Nanes and Gene Ramos, Tonton and Bert Carandang, Marie Tess (†), Rico (†), Darna and Jorge Benavides, Frederick and Gidget Marasigan, Dodie and Lyna Marasigan, and Nenita De La Cruz; grandchildren, Billy and Aida, Becky, Popot and Douglas. Binky and Ella, Marotte, Kevin; Jayvee, Donna, Charley, Joyce, Camille; Nikko, Eric and Lisa; Jayjay, Angeline, Biebie and Chelor; Franco, Andre'; Isobel; Aries; great grandchildren Melissa, Colleen, Patrick; Nicolo, Joshua; Kitoy, Karlo; Bea; Manoli and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at St. Alphonsus Mary de Ligouri Chapel, Magallanes Village, Makati City.

Interment will be on June 8, 2001 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City after the 8:00 A.M. Mass at the Magallanes Church.

## Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

## JOSE MANUEL LAYA VILLANUEVA

October 15, 1953 - May 21, 2001

wish to convey our heartfelt gratitude to all those who, in one way or another, condoled with us in our time of bereavement. May God reward you abundantly.

In Loving Memory of

### INEDA VENTOZA CASAS - VALCORZA

Born : February 12, 1931  
 Died : May 30, 2001

We will surely miss you,  
 You will always be in our hearts.

Your loving Husband, Children & Grandchildren.

In Loving Memory

on the 3rd Death Anniversary

### ATTY. JOSE T. RUBIO

of Daraga, Albay

*Who died in the Grace of our Lord  
 on June 7, 1998.*

His family requests relatives, friends and pious readers to pray for his eternal rest.

## AURORA P. TABUENA

(President, Bicol College)

Daraga, Albay

*Peacefully joined her Creator on June 4, 2001  
 at the age of 68.*

We, her family, relatives and friends will deeply miss her presence but the happy memories of her love will be in our hearts forever.

Her remains lie in state at 137 Rizal Street, Sagpon, Daraga, Albay.

Interment will be on Saturday, June 9, 2001 at the family mausoleum in Daraga Cemetery, after the 12:30 PM Mass.

In Loving Memory

on the 15th Death Anniversary of

### IMELDA PAMINTUAN DE LEON

Holy Masses will be offered tomorrow, Friday, June 8, 2001,  
 at the following churches:

|                                                          |         |
|----------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Immaculate Conception, Lantana, Cubao, Q.C.              | 6:00 AM |
| Mary the Queen, Greenhills, San Juan, M.M.               | 6:00 AM |
| Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City       | 6:15 AM |
| Christ the King, E. Rodriguez, Sr. Blvd., Q.C.           | 6:30 AM |
| St. John the Baptist, Pinaglabanan, San Juan, M.M.       | 6:30 AM |
| St. John Bosco, Armatz St., Makati                       | 6:30 AM |
| Our Lady of EDSA, EDSA cor. Ortigas, Q.C.                | 6:30 AM |
| Espirito Santo, Rizal Ave., Manila                       | 7:00 AM |
| St. Vincent de Paul, San Marcelino, Ermita, Manila       | 7:15 AM |
| Santuario de San Jose, Greenhills, Mandaluyong           | 7:15 AM |
| Manila Metropolitan Cathedral, Intramuros, Manila        | 7:30 AM |
| Lady of Lourdes, Kuntum cor. Retiro, Q.C.                | 7:30 AM |
| Most Holy Rosary, La Naval de Manila, Sto. Domingo, Q.C. | 8:00 AM |
| Bl. Sacrament Fathers & Brothers, Sta. Cruz, Manila      | 8:00 AM |
| Mt. Carmel, J. Rodriguez, New Manila, Q.C.               | 6:00 PM |

We, her family, who remember her dearly, request relatives, friends and the pious readers to join us in our prayers for the repose of her soul.

**W**e know that God raised the Lord Jesus from death. He will raise us to life with Jesus. He will present us, along with you, to God.

2 Cor. 4:14

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| <b>FLORESCO FUNERAL HOME</b><br>219 Gen. Luna St., Concepcion, Malabon, Metro Manila<br>Tels. 2812963, 2813034, 2810522                                                                                | <b>SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE PARISH</b><br>East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City<br>Telefax 724-4139, 725-2044                                     |
| <b>FUNERARIA PANGILINAN</b><br>Santo Entierro cor. P. Burgos St., Lourdes Sur, Angeles City<br>(045) 322-5247, (045) 888-2959                                                                          | <b>ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGOURI PARISH</b><br>Magallanes Village, Makati City<br>Tels. 852-6228, 852-7264                                 |
| <b>GARDEN OF MEMORIES MEMORIAL PARK</b><br>Calsadang Bago, Paleros, Metro Manila<br>Tels. 649-6181 to 82                                                                                               | <b>ST. MARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL</b><br>16-15 G. Tuazon cor. Loreto St., Sampaloc, Manila<br>Tels. 749-3679, 781-1772                           |
| <b>HOLY TRINITY MEMORIAL CHAPELS</b><br>S. Cal. Pasay City. Tels. 325-1299, 8-5121                                                                                                                     | <b>ST. PETER FUNERAL HOMES</b><br>298 Quezon Ave., Quezon City<br>Tels. 372-5084, 410-9260 / 87                                            |
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## City Lite premieres 'Spot'

CITY Lite 88.3 and Warner Brothers Pictures present the advance screening of "Spot" at Cinema 11 of SM Megamall at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, June 8. The advance screening of "Spot" is brought to by Total Petroleum, "Cook" magazine, "Men's Zone," and Jollibee. For inquiries, call City Lite's hotline at 631-8803.

## Enneagram workshop at Chakra

"ENNEAGRAM in Love and Work," a workshop for those who have completed the Basic Enneagram workshop, will be offered at the Center for Health and Creative Arts (Chakra) on Saturday and Sunday, June 9 and 10, from 9 a.m. to 5 in the afternoon. Participants will gain insights into the complex inner world of their spouses, family members, friends and colleagues, enabling them to improve relationships in love and work. The Enneagram is a system of personality typing and is now being used in education and business. Chakra is located at 144 B. Gonzales Street, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. Call Emma or Orlan at Chakra, 434-5381 and 426-5368.

## Eastmont Ads' 7th year

EASTMONT Advertising, Inc., a full-service advertising agency, observes its seventh year in the industry on June 8, Friday. Ma. Isabel Ferreria, EAI president and general manager, notes that the second quarter of the current year signaled a more positive and optimistic approach to advertising and marketing expenditures. Eastmont Advertising has always maintained a lean and mean staff. Ferreria stresses the fact that EAI has proven many times that it can do "what the big boys do." Ferreria, together with every Eastmont Associate, looks back at the past seven years with full gratitude to all clients, as well as suppliers who have given their full trust, confidence and support.

## AIM's open house for entrepreneurs

THE AIM's Asian Center for Entrepreneurship (ACE) will hold its 3rd open house for individuals interested in pursuing a Master in Entrepreneurship (ME) degree on June 9, Saturday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Asian Institute of Management. The ME open house affords interested applicants the opportunity to keep abreast with enterprise development trends and opportunities for the SME sector during a whole-day briefing/workshop conducted by ACE experts led by AIM Dean Eduardo Morato, Jr., the program's architect. To reserve your complimentary seats, call Romeo Fernando, ME program manager or Lolita Calero at 892-4011 locals 220 and 332, fax 817-9240 or email at ace@aim.edu.ph.

### INTERPHIL LABORATORIES, INC.

CANLUBANG INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, BO. PITTLAND  
4025 CABUYAO, LAGUNA

CABLE ADDRESS  
"INTERPHIL" MANILA  
FAX NO. 817-2435



ADDRESS ALL MAIL TO:  
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MAKATI CENTRAL  
POST OFFICE  
1268 MAKATI CITY, PHILS.

### NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the annual meeting of the stockholders of INTERPHIL LABORATORIES, INC. will be held at the Ayala Function Hall, Makati Sports Club, Makati City, Philippines on June 28, 2001 at 3:00 P.M.

The AGENDA for the meeting shall be as follows:

1. Call to order;
2. Certification by the Corporate Secretary on the sending of notices and existence of a quorum;
3. Reading and Approval of minutes of the last Annual Stockholders' Meeting;
4. Report of the President;
5. Approval of the Financial Statements for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2000;
6. Ratification by a majority vote of the stockholders, of actions taken by the Board of Directors and Officers of the Corporation since the last annual meeting of the stockholders;
7. Amendment of the Second Article (Primary and Secondary Purposes) of the Corporation's Articles of Incorporation;
8. Election of Directors;
9. Directors' fees;
10. Appointment of External Auditors;
11. Transactions of such other matters as may properly come before the meeting;
12. Other Matters;
13. Adjournment.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, but would like to be represented thereat, you may submit your proxy to the Corporate Secretary at the Third Floor, Zuellig Building, Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City, on or before June 20, 2001, together with a board resolution authorizing your representative, in case of corporate stockholders. Proxies received after June 20, 2001 shall not be recognized for the meeting.

Registration starts at 2:00 P.M. Only stockholders of record as of May 10, 2001 are entitled to vote and be voted during the meeting. For your convenience in registering your attendance, please have available some form of identifications, such as your Community Tax Certificate, Passport or Driver's License.

Makati City, Philippines, May 4, 2001.

*Ana Peralta-Nazareno*  
ANA PERALTA-NAZARENO  
Corporate Secretary

TEL. NOS. (049) 549-2345 TO 549-2349; 549-3096 TO 549-3098

## New CEO of Systems Union Asia Pacific

SYSTEMS Union Group, a leading provider of financial, order fulfillment and e-business solutions that deliver collaborative commerce capabilities, has announced the appointment of Ashley Clarke as chief executive officer, Asia Pacific.

Based in Hong Kong and reporting directly to Systems Union Group plc chief executive officer Paul Coleman, Clarke will oversee the strategic directions for the six offices in Asia Pacific, including the Singapore office (Systems Union Software Pte. Ltd.), in market entry and penetration strategies, sales and marketing functions, and investment and product development strategies.

Clarke brings a wealth of international software experience to his new position, including that gained over the last 10 years with Systems Union. Having joined the company in 1991, Clarke was promoted to chief operating officer for

Asia Pacific in 1996, responsible for growing the revenue and profitability of the region.

"This is an exciting time for the financial and e-business solutions industry in Asia," said Clarke. "Asian companies will increasingly demand for sophisticated and reliable web-enabled systems to support integration in the global marketplace, as well as e-consulting services to help extend business possibilities into an e-business paradigm. We anticipate significantly expanded opportunities in Asia over the coming several years and I look forward to helping Systems Union participate in this growth."

Systems Union currently operates six offices throughout Asia Pacific, with more than 6,600 customers throughout the region. It is represented in the Philippines through Solutions Consulting Group, Inc. (SCGI).

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San Fernando, La Union

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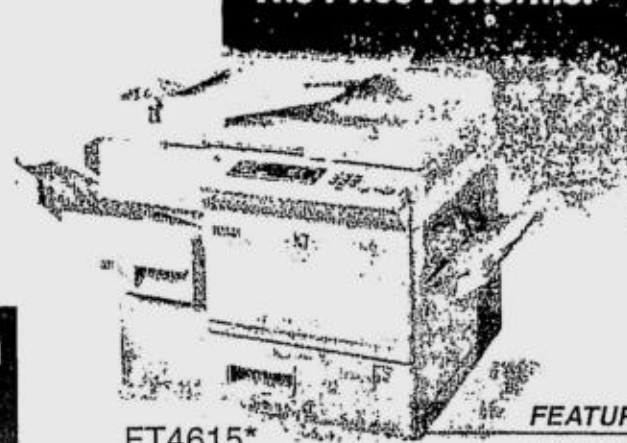


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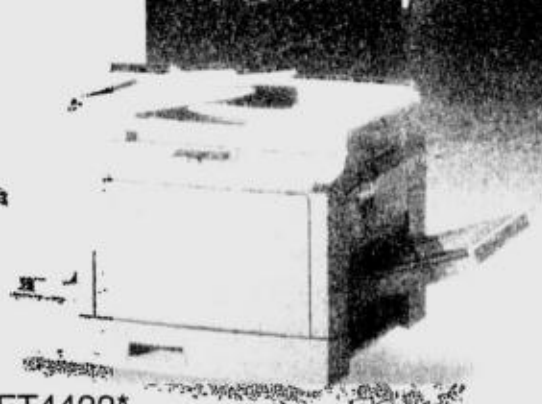


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## Philippine Stock Exchange

| STOCKS                                           | OPEN   | HIGH   | LOW    | CLOSE  | VOLUME     |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|------------|
| <b>(As of Wednesday, June 6, 2001)</b>           |        |        |        |        |            |
| <b>BANKS &amp; FINANCIAL SERVICES</b>            |        |        |        |        |            |
| Bank of the Phil. Islands                        | 74     | 74     | 72.5   | 73     | 347,500    |
| Chinatrust Comm. Bank                            | 16     | 16     | 16     | 16     | 1,000      |
| Equitable PCI Bank Inc.                          | 39     | 39     | 38     | 38     | 58,000     |
| First E-Bank Corp.                               | 2.18   | 2.18   | 2.18   | 2.18   | 5,000      |
| Metropolitan Bank & Trust                        | 218    | 220    | 218    | 219    | 58,150     |
| Philippine National Bank                         | 50     | 50     | 50     | 50     | 100        |
| Phil. Savings Bank                               | 29     | 30     | 29     | 30     | 6,800      |
| <b>FINANCIAL SERVICE</b>                         |        |        |        |        |            |
| Bankard Inc.                                     | 1.42   | 1.42   | 1.42   | 1.42   | 23,000     |
| First Metro Invest. Corp.                        | 231    | 245    | 231    | 241    | 900        |
| Manulife Financial Corp.                         | 1285   | 1300   | 1285   | 1300   | 2,030      |
| Sun Life Financial Serv.                         | 1115   | 1130   | 1115   | 1125   | 6,990      |
| <b>COMMERCIAL &amp; INDUSTRIAL</b>               |        |        |        |        |            |
| <b>COMMUNICATION</b>                             |        |        |        |        |            |
| ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.                       | 38     | 38.5   | 38     | 38.5   | 12,000     |
| Digital Telecom Phils Inc.                       | 0.41   | 0.49   | 0.4    | 0.47   | 12,240,000 |
| Globe Telecom Inc.                               | 670    | 670    | 670    | 670    | 300        |
| Island Info and Tech Inc.                        | 0.04   | 0.04   | 0.04   | 0.04   | 500,000    |
| Liberty Telecom Holdings                         | 0.47   | 0.48   | 0.47   | 0.48   | 140,000    |
| Pitell                                           | 0.6    | 0.6    | 0.6    | 0.6    | 160,000    |
| Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.                           | 610    | 620    | 610    | 615    | 34,860     |
| Ivantage Corp.                                   | 0.8    | 0.8    | 0.8    | 0.8    | 10,000     |
| Philweb.Com Inc.                                 | 0.04   | 0.04   | 0.039  | 0.04   | 84,900,000 |
| <b>POWER &amp; ENERGY</b>                        |        |        |        |        |            |
| Manila Electric Co. A                            | 39.5   | 40     | 39.5   | 39.5   | 4,800      |
| Manila Electric Co. B                            | 55.5   | 55.5   | 54.5   | 55     | 1,895,200  |
| Petron Corp.                                     | 2.28   | 2.34   | 2.14   | 2.16   | 27,762,000 |
| Trans-Asia Oil and Energy                        | 0.86   | 0.86   | 0.86   | 0.86   | 40,000     |
| <b>TRANSPORTATION SERVICES</b>                   |        |        |        |        |            |
| Asian Terminals Inc.                             | 1.18   | 1.2    | 1.18   | 1.2    | 45,000     |
| Int'l Container Term'l Sv                        | 2.75   | 2.75   | 2.5    | 2.55   | 14,085,000 |
| Negros Navigation Co. Inc.                       | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.15   | 100,000    |
| William, Gothong & Abolitz                       | 1.24   | 1.24   | 1.24   | 1.24   | 1,000      |
| <b>CONSTRUCTION &amp; OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS</b> |        |        |        |        |            |
| Engineering Equip. Inc.                          | 0.4    | 0.4    | 0.4    | 0.4    | 200,000    |
| Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.                       | 1.2    | 1.2    | 1.2    | 1.2    | 10,000     |
| Union Cement Corp.                               | 1.2    | 1.24   | 1.2    | 1.24   | 4,590,000  |
| <b>FOOD, BEVERAGES &amp; TOBACCO</b>             |        |        |        |        |            |
| Cosmos Bottling Corp.                            | 4.05   | 4.05   | 3.7    | 3.75   | 374,000    |
| Jollibee Foods Corp.                             | 13.25  | 13.25  | 13     | 13.25  | 307,800    |
| La Tondena Distillers Inc.                       | 27     | 27     | 27     | 27     | 26,700     |
| Pure Foods Corp. A                               | 110    | 110    | 110    | 110    | 3,500      |
| Pure Foods Corp. B                               | 110    | 110    | 110    | 110    | 40         |
| RFM Corp.                                        | 1.2    | 1.36   | 1.2    | 1.32   | 2,253,000  |
| San Miguel Corp. A                               | 41.5   | 42     | 41.5   | 41.5   | 31,400     |
| San Miguel Corp. B                               | 46.5   | 46.5   | 46.5   | 46.5   | 89,800     |
| Vitarich Corp.                                   | 0.49   | 0.49   | 0.49   | 0.49   | 100,000    |
| <b>HOLDING FIRMS</b>                             |        |        |        |        |            |
| Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.                          | 6.9    | 6.9    | 4.2    | 4.2    | 10,000     |
| Abacus Con Res & Hdg A                           | 0.68   | 0.68   | 0.68   | 0.68   | 20,000     |
| Ayala Corp.                                      | 7.3    | 7.3    | 7.2    | 7.3    | 1,087,000  |
| Abolitz Equity Ventures                          | 1.62   | 1.62   | 1.52   | 1.52   | 1,995,000  |
| Alliance Global Group Inc.                       | 11     | 11.5   | 10.75  | 11     | 1,800      |
| Ajo Net Holdings Inc.                            | 0.79   | 0.79   | 0.79   | 0.79   | 50,000     |
| A. Soriano Corp.                                 | 0.59   | 0.59   | 0.57   | 0.57   | 1,380,000  |
| APC Group Inc.                                   | 0.16   | 0.16   | 0.16   | 0.16   | 530,000    |
| Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.                           | 0.0055 | 0.0055 | 0.0055 | 0.0055 | 11,000,000 |
| Balabac Resources & Hldgs                        | 0.16   | 0.16   | 0.16   | 0.16   | 10,000     |
| Bacotat Cons Indus Inc.                          | 12.25  | 12.25  | 12.25  | 12.25  | 500        |
| Benpres Holdings Corp.                           | 1.48   | 1.64   | 1.48   | 1.62   | 16,485,000 |
| Basic Consolidated Inc.                          | 0.14   | 0.14   | 0.14   | 0.14   | 400,000    |
| DMCI Holdings Inc.                               | 0.3    | 0.3    | 0.3    | 0.3    | 1,220,000  |
| Ebecom Holdings Inc.                             | 0.0825 | 0.1    | 0.0825 | 0.1    | 1,300,000  |
| Firstinvest Dev. Corp.                           | 1.16   | 1.18   | 1.12   | 1.12   | 1,028,000  |
| First Phil Hldgs Corp.                           | 23.75  | 24     | 23.75  | 23.75  | 252,600    |
| Global Equities Inc.                             | 0.22   | 0.22   | 0.22   | 0.22   | 1,600,000  |
| Ionics Inc.                                      | 11.25  | 11.5   | 11.25  | 11.5   | 53,000     |
| J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.                        | 1.96   | 2      | 1.96   | 2      | 220,000    |
| Marsteel Cons. Inc. B                            | 0.012  | 0.012  | 0.012  | 0.012  | 2,400,000  |
| Megaworld Corp.                                  | 0.74   | 0.74   | 0.74   | 0.74   | 1,180,000  |
| Multitech Inv. Corp.                             | 0.31   | 0.32   | 0.31   | 0.32   | 500,000    |
| Metro Pacific Corp.                              | 0.47   | 0.47   | 0.47   | 0.47   | 570,000    |
| East Asia Power Res. Corp                        | 0.5    | 0.6    | 0.5    | 0.6    | 480,000    |
| Solid Group Inc.                                 | 0.49   | 0.5    | 0.49   | 0.5    | 210,000    |
| Tanday Holdings Inc.                             | 6      | 6      | 6      | 6      | 10,000     |
| Unifil Res. & Holdings Co.                       | 0.06   | 0.06   | 0.06   | 0.06   | 100,000    |
| Uniwid Holdings Inc.                             | 0.28   | 0.29   | 0.28   | 0.29   | 450,000    |
| <b>MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION &amp; TRADING</b> |        |        |        |        |            |
| Interphil Labs Inc. A                            | 1.1    | 1.1    | 1.1    | 1.1    | 58,000     |
| Jardine Davies Inc.                              | 15     | 15     | 15     | 15     | 3,000      |
| Metro Alliance Holdings                          | 0.55   | 0.55   | 0.55   | 0.55   | 20,000     |
| Music Corp.                                      | 2.34   | 2.34   | 2.24   | 2.28   | 426,000    |
| Picop Resources Inc.                             | 0.095  | 0.1    | 0.095  | 0.095  | 500,000    |
| Central Azucar Don Pedro                         | 0.89   | 0.9    | 0.89   | 0.89   | 180,000    |
| SPI Technologies Inc.                            | 15.75  | 15.75  | 15.5   | 15.5   | 136,900    |
| <b>HOTEL, RECREATION &amp; OTHER SERVICE</b>     |        |        |        |        |            |
| Bella Corp.                                      | 0.48   | 0.48   | 0.48   | 0.48   | 490,000    |
| Fairmont Holdings Inc.                           | 0.51   | 0.56   | 0.51   | 0.55   | 6,510,000  |
| Letsure & Resorts Corp.                          | 0.5    | 0.5    | 0.5    | 0.5    | 120,000    |
| <b>BONDS, PREFERRED &amp; WARRANTS</b>           |        |        |        |        |            |
| ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)                        | 37.5   | 38     | 37.5   | 38     | 8,700      |
| DMCI Holdings Inc. - Pref.                       | 490    | 490    | 490    | 490    | 3,300      |
| Equitable PCI Bank-War                           | 2.5    | 2.5    | 2.2    | 2.2    | 508,000    |
| Jollibee Warrants                                | 12.75  | 12.75  | 12.75  | 12.75  | 50,300     |
| RFM Corp. - Pref.                                | 3.5    | 3.55   | 3.5    | 3.55   | 600,000    |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series R                         | 10     | 10     | 10     | 10     | 1,000      |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series S                         | 10     | 10     | 10     | 10     | 2,400      |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series T                         | 10     | 10     | 10     | 10     | 76,000     |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series W                         | 10     | 10     | 10     | 10     | 19,000     |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series X                         | 10     | 10     | 10     | 10     | 7,000      |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z                         | 10     | 10     | 10     | 10     | 25,000     |
| Philweb.Com Inc. -Warrants                       | 0.031  | 0.031  | 0.029  | 0.029  | 23,600,000 |
| <b>PROPERTY</b>                                  |        |        |        |        |            |
| Ayala Land Inc.                                  | 4.65   | 4.65   | 4.5    | 4.6    | 16,702,000 |
| C & P Homes Inc.                                 | 0.31   | 0.34   | 0.31   | 0.34   | 2,350,000  |
| Cyber Bay Corp.                                  | 0.29   | 0.29   | 0.29   | 0.29   | 2,060,000  |
| Empire East Land Inc.                            | 0.31   | 0.31   | 0.31   | 0.31   | 1,720,000  |
| Firstinvest Land Inc.                            | 2.2    | 2.36   | 2.2    | 2.3    | 18,657,000 |
| Fil-Estate Land, Inc.                            | 0.3    | 0.3    | 0.3    | 0.3    | 170,000    |
| SM Development Corp.                             | 0.8    | 0.8    | 0.8    | 0.8    | 50,000     |
| SM Prime Holdings Inc.                           | 6.4    | 6.4    | 6.4    | 6.4    | 720,000    |
| Universal Rightfield Prop                        | 0.08   | 0.08   | 0.08   | 0.08   | 800,000    |
| <b>MINING</b>                                    |        |        |        |        |            |
| Apex Mining Co. Inc B                            | 0.005  | 0.005  | 0.005  | 0.005  | 1,000,000  |
| Dizon Copper Silver Mines                        | 2      | 2      | 2      | 2      | 1,000      |
| Ilogon-Suyoc Mines A                             | 0.012  | 0.012  | 0.012  | 0.012  | 400,000    |
| Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A                          | 0.16   | 0.16   | 0.16   | 0.16   | 1,900,000  |
| Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B                          | 0.18   | 0.18   | 0.18   | 0.18   | 60,000     |
| Omico Corp.                                      | 0.004  | 0.004  | 0.004  | 0.004  | 10,000,000 |
| Phillex Mining Corp. A                           | 0.185  | 0.19   | 0.185  | 0.19   | 460,000    |
| Phillex Mining Corp. B                           | 0.225  | 0.225  | 0.22   | 0.22   | 400,000    |
| <b>OIL</b>                                       |        |        |        |        |            |
| Imperial Res.                                    | 0.019  | 0.019  | 0.019  | 0.019  | 1,000,000  |
| Interport Res.                                   | 0.004  | 0.004  | 0.004  | 0.004  | 2,000,000  |
| Interport Res. B                                 | 0.004  | 0.004  | 0.004  | 0.004  | 2,000,000  |
| Oriental Pet. & Min. A                           | 0.0042 | 0.0042 | 0.0042 | 0.0042 | 2,000,000  |
| Oriental Pet. & Min. B                           | 0.004  | 0.004  | 0.004  | 0.004  | 4,000,000  |
| The Philodrill Corp. A                           | 0.19   | 0.19   | 0.19   | 0.19   | 10,000     |
| The Philodrill Corp. B                           | 0.19   | 0.19   | 0.19   | 0.19   | 210,000    |
| Pacific                                          | 0.013  | 0.013  | 0.013  | 0.013  | 16,000,000 |
| Sinophl Corp.                                    | 0.065  | 0.065  | 0.065  | 0.065  | 100,000    |
| South China Resources Inc                        | 0.19   | 0.19   | 0.19   | 0.19   | 30,000     |
| Vulcan Ind'l                                     | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.15   | 0.15   | 150,000    |

## CURRENCIES

| Country        | Unit      | Euro Equivalent | Foreign currency in US\$ | Foreign currency in Peso |
|----------------|-----------|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| United States  | Dollar    | 1.170412        | 1.000000                 | 50.6450                  |
| Japan          | Yen       | 0.009730        | 0.008313                 | 0.4210                   |
| United Kingdom | Pound     | 1.653909        | 1.413100                 | 71.5664                  |
| Hong Kong      | Dollar    | 0.150061        | 0.128212                 | 6.4933                   |
| Switzerland    | Franc     | 0.659016        | 0.563063                 | 28.5163                  |
| Canada         | Dollar    | 0.765075        | 0.653680                 | 33.1056                  |
| Singapore      | Dollar    | 0.646030        | 0.551968                 | 27.9544                  |
| Australia      | Dollar    | 0.595023        | 0.508388                 | 25.7473                  |
| Bahrain        | Dinar     | 3.104706        | 2.652661                 | 134.3440                 |
| Saudi Arabia   | Rial      | 0.312085        | 0.266645                 | 13.5042                  |
| Brunei         | Dollar    | 0.643614        | 0.549904                 | 27.8499                  |
| Indonesia      | Rupiah    | 0.000104        | 0.000089                 | 0.0045                   |
| Thailand       | Baht      | 0.026038        | 0.022247                 | 1.1267                   |
| UAE            | Dirham    | 0.318696        | 0.272294                 | 13.7903                  |
| Korea          | Won       | 0.000911        | 0.000778                 | 0.0394                   |
| Euro           | Euro      | 1.000000        | 0.854400                 | 43.2711                  |
| Germany        | Mark      | 0.511292        | 0.436848                 | 22.1242                  |
| France         | Franc     | 0.152450        | 0.130252                 | 6.5966                   |
| Netherlands    | Guilder   | 0.453780        | 0.387710                 | 19.6356                  |
| Austria        | Schilling | 0.072673        | 0.062092                 | 3.1446                   |
| Belgium        | Franc     | 0.024789        | 0.021180                 | 1.0727                   |
| Italy          | Lire      | 0.000516        | 0.000441                 | 0.0223                   |
| Finland        | Markka    | 0.168188        | 0.143700                 | 7.2777                   |
| Portugal       | Escudo    | 0.004988        | 0.004262                 | 0.2158                   |
| Spain          | Peseta    | 0.006010        | 0.005135                 | 0.2601                   |
| Luxemburg      | Franc     | 0.024789        | 0.02118                  | 1.0727                   |
| Ireland        | Punt      | 1.269738        | 1.084864                 | 54.9429                  |

## Tough of the line

## BREAKTIME



Conrado R. Banal III

IT'S time we in media help Gloriaaetta fight the enemy. We must stop asking her, and maybe even her Cabinet, in the off chance they are allowed to speak, some tough questions. Let's not try to find out how this cute administration spends our taxes.

The enemy is not some political has-been who is rotting in jail at a government hospital with a top-of-the-line golf course. The enemy is the Abu Sayyaf. This time, the enemy is so dangerous, that a foreign wire service called them "ragtag bandits."

In Gloriaaetta's weekly press conference the other day, somebody asked how much the government is spending each day to scour the land looking for the enemy, chase them day and night, get them cornered at last, and then let them slip away.

NO, that's not the question, actually! Somebody just asked how much the government spends in the ongoing military operation against the Abu Sayyaf.

And Gloriaaetta said it's still within the budget. Any mathematical figure, boss? You know—as in pesos and centavos?

Gloriaaetta just repeated her earlier answer. It's all within the budget. Such evasiveness! Apparently, the cost is a state secret of the highest order, maybe in the same rank as the Palace's brand of used toilet paper.

FRANKLY, this whole thing is confusing to me. Our government tries to project a tough image in dealing with this pest called the Abu Sayyaf. Time and again, we hear such tough lines. No compromise! No negotiation! Permanent solution!

Yet the same government shirks at the slightest hint of controversy. Again, and this time with feelings, that the conflict costs the government dearly, which means it costs all of us, is in itself an undeniable fact. Why can't it deserve a straightforward answer?

Because it is bound to raise hell, that's why. Even the evasive answer, that it's still within the budget, would invite a nasty follow-up. So what other things in the budget do we have to sacrifice to finance the conflict? Garbage collection, perhaps.

YOU have to understand why Gloriaaetta is sensitive

to talks of cost. This cute administration, plus its leading supporters, meaning, those in big businesses, have been screaming themselves hoarse about an unaffordable budget. Money, in short.

As a rule, our government always does not have enough of it. That's why, as per the military, our soldiers are dying in combat. No money to equip them, boss!

But if government finances are so tight, you have to take away from one high priority to give to another high priority. If we go to war, our kids grow up ignorant.

As it is, Education Secretary Raul Roco must just suffer his migraines. It's either we put the money into education, for example, or we chase the Abu Sayyaf all over the place, frightening everybody along the way.

SUCH a perpetual complaint about an eternal lack of funds, by the way, is not the reason why Roco, in the first place, got the post in Education. This appointment, of course, sent a lot of eyebrows in business all the way up to the executive penthouse.

Everybody knows that Roco has an eye set for 2004, and the other eye, for 2010. Gloriaaetta must be thinking of 2004, too. Why did she have to help him build a launching pad? After his term in the Senate expires, Roco bows out of the national limelight.

In DECS, on the other hand, as political analysts love to point out, Roco can get close to the public school teachers, who are the foot soldiers in every election. Meaning, they are the ones who are shot at first.

FROM there, Roco can then build something he

sorely lacked in his previous attempt at the presidency—a potent political machinery. If Gloriaaetta is not stupid, which some say she definitely isn't, why did she give Roco such a strategic post.

There's this theory gaining popularity in beer gardens. As my drinking buddy sees it, Roco should only fail in DECS.

Well, nobody ever succeeded there. The DECS is often hated by many. Clue: tuition fee! It's hard to please some 30 million families of all those kids going to school. That's a lot of votes. There, Korina, can I take you out to dinner now?

BUT let's go back to the tough line of this cute administration against the Abu Sayyaf. I thought



## UNPROFITABLE MARKET

## After 2 decades, Bank of Hawaii leaves RP

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

AFTER more than two decades, Honolulu-based Bank of Hawaii, the biggest commercial bank in the state of Hawaii, is leaving the Philippines.

Well-placed banking sources yesterday told the INQUIRER that the bank decided to shut down its representative office in Manila as part of its regional strategy to divest from unprofitable markets and focus on its core opera-

tions in Hawaii and the West Pacific.

An official confirmed that Bank of Hawaii was planning to dissolve its Philippine office by Aug. 31 and was working on a "graceful exit."

Persons familiar with the matter said the bank's top executives were already holding farewell meetings with their local business partners.

One source said Bank of Hawaii would soon host a "big farewell party" to thank all those who supported its

Philippine operations since it opened a representative office in the late 1970s.

Unlike an offshore banking unit, which can offer customary banking services by itself except take in deposits like a regular branch, representative offices act as a "middleman" between its parent company and clients in an offshore location. Its operation is dependent on the business activity of the parent company.

It was in April this year that Michael O' Neill, chair and chief executive of

Bank of Hawaii, disclosed in Honolulu a new corporate strategic plan designed to maximize shareholder value.

The new plan, which took effect immediately and would extend through 2003, was the result of an intensive and detailed four-month strategic assessment process, during which the company decided to divest or wind down its holdings in California, most of the South Pacific and Asia.

Bank of Hawaii would retain opera-

tions in Hawaii, the West Pacific, American Samoa and Japan, and maintain an office in Arizona for its leasing operations and technology support.

"The decision to divest, while necessary, was certainly difficult since the company has served these regions for many years and has strong historical ties," said O'Neill.

"Although financial projections for these businesses forecast improvement, current and expected returns were insuf-

ficient when compared to those in Hawaii and the West Pacific. These lines of business were not creating value for our shareholders," he said.

Bank of Hawaii is a principal banking subsidiary of Pacific Century Financial Corp.

After the April announcement of its new corporate plan, the bank divested 20 full branches in California while its parent company sold its stake in Bank of Queensland.

## P3.7-B Napocor loss a 'financial challenge'

OUTGOING Energy Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho clarified yesterday that the National Power Corp.'s estimate of a P3.7-billion revenue reduction was just a "financial challenge."

"It's more of a funding gap rather than a loss," Camacho told reporters.

Napocor president Jesus Alcorido said earlier Napocor would incur losses because of the implementation of a 30-centavo-per-kilowatt-hour reduction for residential end-users in line with the newly approved power reform bill.

Congress has ratified the bill, which President Macapagal-Arroyo is set to sign into law tomorrow.

Camacho said the 30-centavo-per-kwh rebate was meant as a "confidence-building measure" for the restructuring of the power sector.

He said the initial losses that Napocor would incur because of the rebate would be recovered over time through savings as the process of financial restructuring unfolded.

"Even the cost of the contracts with independent power producers alone, we can recover through the

universal charge," Camacho said.

"The losses are simply a matter of timing. It's a funding gap," he stressed.

The power reform bill provides for the 15- to 25-year amortization of Napocor's contracts with independent power producers. This translates to additional charges of 25 to 30 centavos per kwh.

"(The 30-centavo-per-kwh reduction) is like advancing our savings, which would take time to collect," Camacho said.

The rebate on Napocor's effective selling rate for residential consumers would "take effect immediately upon the passage of the measure," he said.

According to Napocor's figures, residential end-users account for 33 percent of total power sales.

Alcorido said it would take an average of two months following the implementation of the power sector reform law before consumers would feel the rebate.

Napocor said it lost only P790 million in the first quarter, which meant a 76.5-percent recovery from the year-ago figure of P3.4 billion.

Ronnel W. Domingo

## Isuzu to double production of AUVs

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

ISUZU Philippines Corp. is jacking up by more than 100 percent its production of Asian-utility vehicles this year to meet stronger local demand and boost export sales.

Isuzu Philippines executive vice president Hiroshi Ishino said the company would increase production from 400 units a month last year to 1,000 units a month this year in anticipation of stronger demand.

Ishino said production could go up

to as much as 1,200 units should demand for exports meet expectations.

The company is currently exploring export opportunities in South America, China and Taiwan. Last year, Isuzu shipped out 30 AUVs to Honduras, 10 units to Guatemala, and one to Vietnam.

Although Isuzu's Indonesian plant was already producing AUVs for export to Brunei, Ishino said the Philippines had an advantage because Indonesia was making right-hand drive vehicles.

## Rules vs harmful soap ingredients out

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry has finally issued the implementing rules and regulations for Republic Act 8970, which bans the use of hard surfactants in detergent bars and soaps.

Hard surfactants or hard alkylbenzene sulfonates petroleum-based are widely used as surface-active ingredients in the production of detergent bars and soaps.

RA 8970's implementation was deferred because of the DTI's inability to finalize the law's imple-

menting rules and regulations amid intense lobbying by some detergent and soap makers.

The trade department said the release of the implementing rules and regulations would be a boost to environment protection since detergent and soap manufacturers would be forced to remove all their inventory of surfactants in the country.

Under the implementing rules and regulations, importers and manufacturers are required to empty

their warehouses of the surfactants within a year.

Trade officials said the implementing rules and regulations would also benefit the coconut industry, as manufacturers would be forced to use coconut oil in their production as a replacement for surfactants.

The coconut industry is on the brink of a collapse as prices have slumped to an all-time low of P6 from P18 due to declining productivity and a glut in competing veg-

etable oils.

The implementing rules and regulations is widely expected to boost demand for coconut oil.

Soap manufacturers are still allowed to use petroleum-based chemicals up to 40 percent of their inputs even though studies have shown that they degenerate slower than coconut fatty alcohol sulfate and are thus more harmful to the environment since wastes from soap and detergent wastes are flushed to rivers and lakes.

## W. Bank to restructure 2 agri-related projects

THE WORLD Bank said yesterday it would restructure two agriculture- and environment-related development projects due to budget constraints.

World Bank rural sector coordinator Richard Anson told the INQUIRER that the P2.5-billion community-based and resource management project and P1-billion conservation of priority protected areas project would go through major changes.

Anson said these projects either delivered unsatisfactory results or were delayed due to the lack of government counterpart funds.

The P2.5-billion community-based and resource management project, which the Department of Finance

would supervise, would be restructured to limit its scope and number of sub-projects, he said.

Anson said the project covered too many areas. "Assumptions made were proven to be unrealistic. The thrust of the restructuring is basically to reduce the scope and number of sub-projects because of fiscal constraints," he said.

The P1-billion conservation of priority protected areas project, meanwhile, would be reviewed because it was already way behind schedule, Anson said.

He stressed that a restructuring of the two projects "should not be taken negatively as any kind of changes is just coming into grips with the issues as we proceed with the implementation."

## PSE told to sell shares to institutional buyers

BY ELENA R. TORRIJOS

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission is pressing the Philippine Stock Exchange to sell its shares to institutional buyers in line with the stock exchange's mandated demutualization this August.

In a letter to PSE president Ramon Garcia, SEC Chair Lilia Bautista said the commission could not exempt, at this time, brokers and dealers from the provision of the Securities Regulation Code limiting to a maximum 20 percent the stake any industry group could own of the stock exchange.

"If there are no buyers for such shares, we cannot consider you in violation of the 20-percent limitation, provided efforts have been made to look for investors," Bautista said.

Garcia earlier protested the SEC requirement given that the manner in which ownership of the exchange was offered to the public was purely a business decision of the stock exchange and no one else's.

In her letter, however, Bautista argued that as a public trading forum for stock trading in the Philippines, the stock

exchange was required to operate in the public interest. Also, given the fact that the Securities Regulation Code regulated the ownership structure of the stock exchange, there was sufficient basis to conclude the matter was not solely up to the stock exchange, she added.

Bautista disputed Garcia's contention that the transformation of the PSE from a non-stock corporation to a stock corporation was like giving no par shares with par shares.

The SEC chair noted that under the Corporation Code, conversion to a stock structure would not expand a member's rights unless he or she subscribed to shares.

Moreover, Bautista took issue with Garcia's statement that PSE member brokers and dealers have a pecuniary interest in the assets of the exchange.

"Their membership interest pertains exclusively to the rights and privileges of members. Under the Corporation Code, membership does not include an interest in the assets of a not-for-profit entity unless the articles of incorporation specifically provide for such distribution upon dissolution," Bautista said.

## Dissolved state agency still owes GFIs P240B

BUDGET Secretary Emilia Boncodin said yesterday past-due loans of government financial institutions like the Development Bank of the Philippines, Land Bank of the Philippines and Philippine National Bank had swelled due to debts acquired by agencies that had already been dissolved.

One agency, the National Sugar Trading Corp., acquired some P240 billion in loans, Boncodin disclosed. The national government was no longer allocating money to pay for these debts because Nasutra had already been dissolved, she said.

Government financial institutions like PNB, however, still carried these debts as past due, Boncodin said.

She said the government owed at

least P9 billion to PNB. Around P3 billion worth of advances that the bank lent to the Aquino administration were used to pay imports inspector Societe Generale d'Veille.

Most of the Nasutra loans, meanwhile, were debts incurred by the Marcos administration.

PNB reported yesterday a net loss of P2.5 billion in the January-April period on net interest loss of P338 million.

The bank did not give comparative figures.

It said its loss for the period was attributable to provision for probable losses, interest on its loans from the central bank and the state deposit insurance firm, and litigation expenses.

Christine A. Gaylican



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# Nissan, Renault to jointly develop fuel-cell cars that run on gasoline

TOKYO—Nissan Motor Co. and Renault SA of France have decided to develop environment-friendly cars with a fuel cell that runs on gasoline, following the lead of the world's largest automakers, a Japanese newspaper said Monday.

Fuel-cell cars run on electricity produced by taking hydrogen from a hydrogen-containing liquid, such as methanol or gasoline, and combining it with oxygen from air. They emit only water and heat as

exhaust and have become the focal point of research in an industry seeking cleaner alternatives to the internal-combustion engine.

Nissan, which is owned 36.8 percent by Renault, has opted for the gasoline-powered fuel cell because of the likelihood that it will become the American standard, the national Yomiuri newspaper reported in a front page story.

Ritsuko Harimoto, a Nissan spokesperson, could not immediately

say whether the report was true.

In January, General Motors Corp. of the United States and Japan's Toyota Motor Corp. said they would join Exxon Mobil Corp., a major US oil company, in an alliance to develop gasoline as the source of energy for fuel-cell cars.

The announcement by the world's largest and third-largest automakers led Nissan and Renault to come up with a similar model, the Yomiuri said, quoting unidentified

company sources.

Nissan and Renault will spend 85 billion yen (\$714 million) on the project and will market the fuel-cell vehicles as early as 2005, the newspaper said.

Regulators around the world are pressuring automakers to make cars that generate no pollution particles or gases. By 2003, California will require zero-emission cars to make up 4 percent of annual sales in the state. AP

## The race for fuel efficiency

### ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza



near Washington, D.C., its "displacement on demand" innovation: an eight-cylinder engine that shuts off half of its cylinders when the vehicle does not need them, thereby improving fuel efficiency by 8 percent to 10 percent. The engine smoothly powered a Sierra pickup truck over hilly country roads. GM announced it will introduce "displacement on demand" as a standard feature on about 150,000 vehicles in 2004, increasing to 1.5 million units in 2007.

GM also displayed a hybrid pickup truck that operates differently from the two hybrid cars now on the road, the Toyota Prius and the Honda Insight, both of which use an electric motor to help propel the wheels. GM's hybrid pickup, on the other hand, contains a device that can act as a generator or motor. When the driver wants to slow down, the device recovers energy by converting momentum into current.

Like GM, DaimlerChrysler also has a fuel-saving "cylinder cutout system" in its Mercedes-Benz S-class vehicles. But Mercedes-Benz, Audi and other European automakers are focusing more on diesel engines since they produce less carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases and diesel costs at least 20 percent cheaper than gasoline. Major advances in European, especially German, diesel technology in the last 10 years have reduced the smoke-belching and metallic knocking noise of diesel-powered cars and vastly improved their acceleration and torque aside from improving the fuel efficiency of the average diesel car to about 40 miles a gallon.

But diesel cars are popular only in Europe. In the United States, strict clean-air standards limit the sale of diesel engines, which are rejected as unacceptable by American environmentalists because of the particulates and cancer-causing soot they emit. Wait till they see the smoke-belching diesel jeeps, buses, trucks, Asian utility vehicles and SUVs poisoning the air we breathe in this country!

**TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER:**  
The earth is full. Go home.

E-mail comments to aida\_sevilla@pacific.net.ph

## Lawyers ask judge to force recall of Ford Explorer

INDIANAPOLIS—Lawyers suing Ford Motor Co. and Bridgestone Corp.'s Firestone unit have asked a federal judge to require that Ford recall most of its Explorer sport utility vehicles.

A motion filed late Friday in Indianapolis federal court claims the 1991 to 2001 Explorer models are "inherently unsafe" and "present a continuing danger to their owners, their occupants and to the American motoring public."

It also alleges there is no engineering solution and asks that Ford be required to give owners a refund or new truck. Ford spokesperson Ken Zino called the motion "frivolous," noting that it included no data that would justify such an action.

"If they have any data, they should be sharing it with the NHTSA," he said. More than 300 personal-injury and class action lawsuits against Ford and Firestone have been consolidated in

Indianapolis for pretrial purposes.

The motion came one day after Firestone asked the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to investigate the Explorer, alleging "safety issues" with a "substantial segment" of the popular SUV.

Firestone maintains that last fall's recall of 6.5 million Ford Explorer tires is sufficient and that its tires alone are not to blame for the rollover accidents that have been linked to 174 US deaths and 700 injuries.

Ford has blamed Firestone for the problems and recently announced it will replace another 13 million Firestone Wilderness AT tires at its own expense.

The plaintiffs' lawyers have already asked US District Court Judge Sarah Evans Barker, chief judge of the Indianapolis federal court, to supervise Ford's tire recall. She has ordered Ford and Firestone to respond to that motion by Tuesday. Reuters



JAPAN GT FESTIVAL IN MALAYSIA

Visitors look at a Toyota Supra Grand Touring race car, during the promotion of the Japan GT race cars at a shopping mall in Kuala Lumpur Sunday. A total of 30 GT cars will compete in the Japan GT festival in Malaysia starting June 22 this year at the Sepang F-1 circuit. AP

## ASIAN, LATIN AMERICAN MARKETS

### Toyota Motor to develop new vehicles

TOKYO—In a bid to expand its global market share, Japan's largest automaker will develop low-cost sports utility vehicles specifically for Asian and Latin American markets, a major Japanese financial newspaper said Tuesday.

Toyota Motor plans to release the SUVs in 2004 and forecasts annual sales of between 500,000 units and 600,000 units, the Nihon

Keizai said without citing sources. Engine capacities will range from 2,000 cc to 3,000 cc, it said.

With demand slowing in Japan, North America and Europe, the company decided to push ahead in the Asian and Latin American markets in the hope that expanding population levels and rising incomes there will boost sales, the Nikkei said.

Toyota spokesperson Paul Nolasco

would only say the automaker is considering a vehicle that would meet the needs of Asian and South American consumers, but declined to confirm other details in the Nikkei article.

Toyota's global sales for the fiscal year to March totaled 5.5 million vehicles, up 6.6 percent from 5.2 million units the previous year. The company has said its world market share trails that of US auto-

makers General Motors Corp. and Ford Motor Co.

Toyota plans to produce and market the new SUVs in Thailand, Indonesia and other Asian nations, as well as in Brazil, South Africa and Turkey, the Nikkei said.

Local prices for the vehicles will range from 700,000 yen (\$5,800) to 1.5 million yen (\$12,600) per unit, the newspaper said. AP



FORD EXPEDITION AWARDED TO CONTRACTOR

House of Sara Lee, one of the country's leading direct selling companies, recently awarded a brand-new Ford Expedition to Domingo Garcia, a service center contractor of the company's Angeles and Tarlac branches. This is part of House of Sara Lee's vehicle incentive program that is specifically designed for its service center contractors who run at least two branches as a special benefit for their outstanding contribution.

## MOTORSCOPE

### Full Calcium Motolite now with EGX

New Technology Full Calcium Motolite is the newest product offering from Oriental and Motolite Marketing Corp., the leading battery manufacturer in the Philippines. It boasts of a maintenance-free design that translates to never having to check battery electrolyte level or adding water. This convenient, hassle-free feature is made possible by the latest technological innovation—using calcium in battery plates. This new technology is used by leading battery manufacturers around the world. New Technology Full Calcium Motolite totally replaces the antimony in low-maintenance batteries with calcium. Full calcium plates lower the danger of overcharging, therefore maintaining to the minimum the amount of water loss due to evaporation. "But having full calcium plates is only the tip of the iceberg. New Technology Motolite is made even better by the expanded lead-calcium grids or EGX," said Robert B. Reyes, OMMC assistant vice president for marketing.

### Nissan Exalta for grand draw winner

PIONEER supermarket Cherry Foodrama, with branches on Shaw Boulevard in Mandaluyong City and Congressional Avenue in Quezon City, recently held its grand raffle draw witnessed by representatives from the Department of Trade and Industry. This year's Congressional Avenue branch winner is Rowel Monilla, who received a brand-new Nissan Exalta from Cherry executive staffers Connie and Tom.

### Ford plant and orientation tour

FORD Philippines Inc. recently hosted a daylong plant and orientation tour at its assembly plant in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, for selected members of the Tomica Collectors Club, an organization of hobbyists and collectors of Tomica die-cast car models. These models have been acclaimed worldwide for their excellent craftsmanship, accurate finish, heavy casting and good paint quality. Club members led by president Alvin Makalino and accompanied by the Ban Kee Trading Inc. marketing department headed by Marvie R. Samala, were given an overview of Ford's operations in the Philippines and its product lines of luxury cars such as Lincoln, Jaguar and Alpha Romeo. The plant tour covered various areas such as assembly, parts installation, painting, leak testing and quality control sections.

## Chrysler unveils drop-top gorgeous convertible

THE CHRYSLER PT Cruiser, voted North American Car of the Year because of its head-turning style, practicality and value—all in one package, is going topless just in time for spring. At the 2001 New York International Auto Show, Chrysler Group designers debuted their latest custom interpretation, with the drop-top gorgeous Chrysler PT Cruiser Convertible styling study.

"The PT Cruiser Convertible is a natural," said Trevor Creed, senior vice president for product design. "In the same tradition as the Chrysler GT Cruiser and PT Panel Cruiser styling studies, this study shows another personality for PT Cruiser. We want to once again demonstrate the tremendous versatility and potential opportunity for PT Cruiser in the future."

Once designers lowered the hender and roof and resculpted the rear wheel flares, this latest PT Cruiser styling study began to take on a new personality. The two-door PT Cruiser Convertible features a new rear quarter panel to accommodate the newly designed longer doors. To further enhance this design study's exterior, body-colored bumpers and a chrome-accented grille were included to reinforce its customized look. In addition, the vehicle was lowered by 1.5 inches (38 mm).

"Based on the regular production Chrysler PT Cruiser, the convertible's design emphasizes its free-spirited attitude," said design director Lance Wagner. "We created a more simplified form. For example, the body-side molding recesses were filled in

PT CRUISER Convertible



to strengthen its contemporary clean lines. There's purity in the convertible's design that respects the original styling. While its fresh appearance embodies a totally new character, it still retains the excitement of the PT Cruiser."

The Chrysler PT Cruiser Convertible is finished in a deep-shadow-blue pearl paint while the interior features a dark taupe and light beige color scheme with cognac and body-color blue accents.

Since the essential part of any cruising experience is taking your friends along, the PT Cruiser Convertible comfortably seats four passengers with theater-style seating. In this configuration, the rear passengers sit higher than the front passengers, giving everyone a command-of-the-road experience.

"Even though the convertible roof was lowered by an inch (25.4 mm), the rear passenger compartment provides ample room and comfort," said senior design

appearance when the top is up. The top is power operated. No powertrain changes have been made to execute this styling study. The vehicle is fitted with New York-themed "Empire" 19-inch cast-aluminum wheels and custom-made Michelin 225/35 ZR19 tires.

"Many will say the Chrysler PT Cruiser Convertible is two vehicles in one," said Creed. "It has a certain modern look when the top is down, with its sporty and long passenger compartment. Yet when up, the top has a slammed-forward retro-position, much like a '30s custom chopped coupé, emulating the tension of a bow being drawn back. Lower, sleeker with even more attitude, the PT Cruiser Convertible styling study is the latest example of the fun we can have with the PT Cruiser. And there's more to come."

Visit your nearest Chrysler dealer to catch a glimpse of the stylish PT Cruiser. Chrysler showrooms are located in Mandaluyong, Cebu, Davao and Iloilo.

manager Jeff Godshall who is responsible for the interior.

"Utility and convenience are added in the interior with a speaker and a mesh storage pocket completing the longer front door trim panels and a recessed arm rest and courtesy light in each quarter panel. Equally practical, the rear and front passenger seats fold down for easy storage, providing pass-through for such things as golf clubs, skis or surf boards," said Godshall.

Evoking classic drop-top design, the PT Cruiser Convertible's roof flows seamlessly and creates a "fastback"

## Toyota extends 'Corolla Drink or Drive' promo

DUE to popular demand, Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. announces the extension of the "Corolla Drink or Drive" promo. For as low as P250 a day or the equivalent of the price of two cocktail drinks, customers can opt to drive home a brand-new Toyota Corolla. Attractive auto finance plans with down payments ranging from as low as 20 percent up to 50 percent payment and payment schemes from 12-month up to 72-month terms are available with the support of the country's leading banks.

These special financing plans easily allow any customer to drive home a brand-new Corolla 1.8 Altis for only P9,706 per month at 50 percent

down payment for a 72-month payment term. A Corolla XL can be had for as low as P6,637 per month under similar terms. Customers may also choose to avail of the low 20-percent down payment schemes.

Cash buyers, on the other hand, will be entitled to a Toyota gift certificate worth P15,000, which they can use as an outright cash discount or can be used to purchase accessories for their new Corolla.

All the special financing deals are made possible in cooperation with the country's leading institutions, namely, ABN Amro, BPI Family Bank, DBS Bank, I Bank, Insular Savings

Bank, Metrobank, PCI Bank, Philam Savings Bank, PS Bank, RBCB Savings Bank and Union Bank.

Finding a color to match the driver's taste will be easier than choosing a cocktail drink. The Corolla has a wide array of exciting colors to choose from. Colors like freedom white, coral red, express black, power blue, earth green, fresh opal, royal beige and stellar blue make the Corolla an instant eye catcher.

The Corolla Drink or Drive promo will be on an extended run until June 15. For more information, please visit your nearest authorized Toyota dealer or log on to [www.toyota.com.ph](http://www.toyota.com.ph).



# RP auto parts makers spruce up for global competition

BY TESSA R. SALAZAR

THE SO-CALLED backbone of the local auto industry—the automotive parts and components manufacturing industry—is getting serious, what with a P33.3-billion investment pumped in by its 256 parts and components companies for the last 25 years.

The auto parts firms are nowadays keen on continuously improving core competencies and addressing the issues concerning technology innovation. The industry says it has been trying hard to keep up with global competition.

In the absence of any economies of scale, local auto parts makers represented by the 94-strong Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturers Association of the Philippines said the industry has to build its competitive advantages. Right now, the association is working on building a competitiveness program to



benefit its members in six months.

The competitiveness building program includes continuing education and training on product costing methods; productivity improvements; process improvements; technology upgrades (see related story); and human resources development through hands-on training. Auto parts makers have also embarked on market development campaigns for exhibits, missions, surveys and benchmarking. The MVPMAP says it has been busy in the last eight months doing exactly that.

"We want to fortify our fences, so to speak. We are currently having stiff market competition. Our locally produced parts face imports (that are imposed) low tariffs," said an MVPMAP official who refused to be named.

So why prepare for liberalization just now?

The MVPMAP said its efforts are anchored on the understanding that if it

improves the core competencies of its members, the auto parts industry in general will compete on a level playing field with foreign competition, even if such moves are considered somewhat late in the day. The MVPMAP believes everything starts with the improvement in the aspects of quality, cost and delivery (QCD).

Auto parts makers are also installing what is called the quality management system (QMS). The QMS is endorsed by the government. The Asia-Pacific Economic Conference is said to be funding the project as well as the Asia Invest of the European Union.

"Once we install a quality management system of international standards into the small and medium enterprises, then we are almost there. We will immediately upgrade and put operational directions. The QMS calls for factual basis and decisions, good

documentation, description of product standards and the standardization of equipment," said an MVPMAP official.

Industry sources said the importance of a local auto parts manufacturing sector cannot be taken for granted. They say if the automotive industry is full of imported parts, these are "dollar out-flow," which have no value added. Added value comes in when the parts and components are made here.

The MVPMAP says this is the reason for the government's motor vehicle development program that started in the early '70s. The MVPDP's basic objective is to develop the parts and components manufacturing industry.

"We have one better thing to do while our government is improving its economy and refining its policies. We must also strengthen the auto parts and components makers' capabilities," said the MVPMAP members.

## AUTO TECH SHARING

### Japanese experts to sharpen RP automotive skills for free

IT is not every day that Japanese automotive technical experts come to the Philippines to share their well-guarded automotive secrets—and for free, at that.

Whether your auto parts firm is a member or a nonmember of the Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturers Association of the Philippines, the MVPMAP said in an interview with the INQUIRER that it is inviting all the 256 auto parts firms in the country to learn new skills. The MVPMAP says it will

focus on technology, where Filipino auto parts makers are considered weak.

The six-month training, which starts June 23, will also cover areas in quality, cost delivery and management (QCDM).

Helping out will be four Japanese experts to address one of the long-standing problems of the parts making industry: late technology. These Japanese experts are expected to visit local factories and help plan and improve viable

operational machinery and systems.

The Japan Overseas Development Corp. and the Japanese External Trade Relations Office helped fund the training. The receiving association is the Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturers Association, which is composed of 94 firms. But the MVPMAP stressed that it is not confining its training to its 94 members.

The MVPMAP said that it is enjoining all auto parts firms to grab the opportunity to up-

date their technological capabilities. "We are opening this to the whole 256 auto parts and components manufacturers to take

advantage of this program," said an MVPMAP officer. The MVPMAP could be reached at Tel. No. 687-2465. Tessa R. Salazar

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## GM-Daewoo talks begin outside South Korea

SEOUL—US auto giant General Motors Corp. said on Monday talks to acquire South Korea's bankrupt Daewoo Motor began at a location outside Korea.

"Talks have begun outside of Korea over the acquisition of Daewoo Motor," GM spokesperson Rob Leggat said.

GM, Daewoo Motor and its main creditor, state-run Korea Development Bank have all refused to confirm the venue of the talks. But local media reports said they began in Hong Kong on Monday.

Leggat declined to give any details about GM's purchase proposal submitted on Wednesday after the world's largest carmaker and its Italian partner Fiat had scrutinized Daewoo's muddled books for six months.

It was unclear if GM would acquire Daewoo's largest production plant in Puyong west of Seoul, as the KDB has insisted.

The plant is Daewoo's oldest production facility and a hotbed of labor protests against a GM takeover. Local media reports said last week GM would consider taking on the Puyong plant in exchange for tax breaks and debt-to-equity swaps by creditor banks.

Other reports said GM offered between \$1 billion and \$2 billion for the Puyong plant, the carmaker's newest plant in Kunsan, a production plant in Changwon that makes subcompact passenger cars and Daewoo Motor Sales, which is the marketing arm of the troubled carmaker.

**Protests**  
KDB Governor Chung Keun-yong said last week GM could reach a preliminary agreement to buy Daewoo Motor in two to three weeks.

Daewoo Motor's assets include manufacturing operations in 12 countries, which employ some 50,000 workers overseas, and 15,700 in Korea. But hefty debts last year gave Daewoo Motor a negative net worth of \$10 billion.

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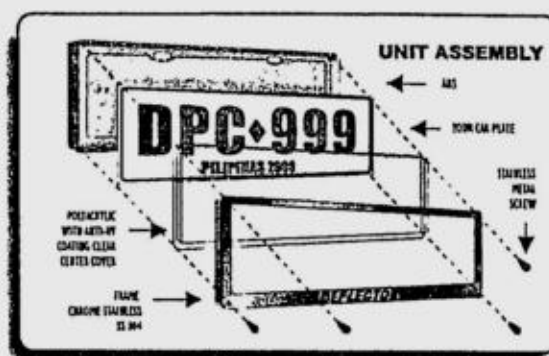
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## LIFESTYLE

CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor



PAN-FRIED Chilean sea bass topped with arugula sweet pepper relish set on poached white asparagus, celery-potato purée and soya butter

## The great white asparagus

BY ALEX Y. VERGARA  
PHOTOS BY ROMY HOMILLADA

**M**ANDARIN Oriental heralds the arrival of summer in Europe with an asparagus food festival at the Tivoli. Dubbed as "Asparagus à la Mode," executive chef Norbert Gandler is preparing the finest "New Asian" dishes garnished or cooked with white asparagus.

Unlike green asparagus, white asparagus is available only in Europe before spring's end. That's why many Europeans have considered it a delicacy. Asparagus festivals are thus common in many parts of the continent this time of the year. Gandler is initially importing more than 200 kg of white asparagus mostly from Germany.

"I may have to import some more," he says. Gandler has treated diners to a similar if limited fare as part of the Tivoli's daily specials last year. It naturally attracted plenty of European guests and expats.

"Some may consider it (asparagus) a mere garnishing," the Austrian chef adds. "In Europe, we eat it plain with potatoes. I'm confident Filipinos will like our dishes as well."

But what sets the white one from its green cousin? Aside from its longer, bigger and more fibrous stalks, white asparagus, at P600 per kilo, is also more expensive. It can also taste bitter if not cooked properly. Gandler, for instance, first boils the stalks in water mixed with sugar, lemon and orange juice.

Meat and fish eaters need not be alarmed. Gandler and executive sous chef Humphrey Navarro are whipping up more than a dozen dishes—from appetizers, soups, to main courses—combining aspara-

gus with such well-loved staples as Australian beef tenderloin, Chilean sea bass, Norwegian salmon, baked lobsters and even duck breast.

The five-course meal he prepared, for example, began with an appetizer consisting of poached white asparagus, which derives its flavor from the Prosciutto de Parma (thin slices of ham), shaved Parmigiano Reggiano (cheese) and arugula pesto. Indeed, the versatile vegetable is a chameleon in the kitchen, the kind that blends well with most ingredients.

Its stringy texture also sets off the pan-fried Chilean sea bass' tender flesh. The fillet is topped with zesty arugula pepper relish placed again on poached white asparagus, celery-potato purée and soya butter. Gandler is also using the green variety. The cappuccino-style soup made of liquefied green asparagus, for instance, is delightfully creamy, if a little salty, and goes well with bits of crispy smoked duck breast.

For the main course, he combined gratinated green and white asparagus with poached potatoes and Australian beef tenderloin flavored with a dash of coarse pepper and a sweet-salty blend of port wine.

The only thing missing was white asparagus parfait for dessert. Instead, Gandler whipped up traditional tiramisu with amaretto biscuit, basil-stewed strawberries and honey ice cream. He's, however, toying with the idea of cooking "caramelized" white asparagus. Good, of course, while supply lasts.

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E-mail the author at [avergara@inquirer.com.ph](mailto:avergara@inquirer.com.ph)

Mandarin Oriental whips up a feast of pan-Asian cuisine using expensive, hard-to-prepare vegetable

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**CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:** Jessica Tandy, Prince, Tom Jones, Anna Kournikova, Jenny Jones, Liam Neeson. **Happy Birthday:** This is your year to shine. Hard work and a good attitude will be advantageous as you engage in all sorts of interesting projects. You may rekindle the relationship you are already in or find new love and romance. Your success will be directly linked to how well-prepared you are. Use your intelligence to engage in talks that will earn favor with important individuals. Your numbers: 10, 14, 23, 27, 33, 41

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** Ignore colleagues who appear to be going nowhere fast. You have plenty to do, so don't let others lead you on a wild goose chase. Keep your priorities straight and focus on moving forward.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Check out long-term investments that offer old-age security. Family members who ask for help with their personal papers may be interested in some of the ventures you're looking into.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Problems with pets will be upsetting. You have to do what's best for everyone concerned when dealing with financial matters. Don't hold in your feelings. Ill health will result if you get stressed out.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** You need to connect with old friends. You'll be surprised how easy it is to pick up where you left off, even with those you haven't seen for a decade. Reunions will raise your self-esteem.

**CANCER (June 21-July 21):** Deception in relationships will be heartrending. Try to look at the situation objectively. There may have been a good reason for their actions. Communication will be important.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Children may not tell you the whole truth. You'll have to dig deep and do a little questioning of your own if you want to get to the bottom of things.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** Uncertainties regarding your domestic scene may lead to discussions and possible moves. Someone you live with will be erratic in behavior and certainly hard to talk to.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** You'll need more time if you want to get everything done. Peers will be demanding, and you'll have to learn to say no if you want to take care of your own needs.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** Don't even think about getting involved in joint ventures. You will lose money if you decide to invest in a risky financial scheme. Gambling could be your downfall.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** You'll have to be honest with yourself if you want to sort out the emotional problems you're having. You may be partly to blame for the way your lover feels. Be reasonable.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Your uncertainties about your job will lead you into educational pursuits or an apprenticeship. Your situation at work may be bad because of an envious colleague who wants your position.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** You won't attract the best individuals. You will have to be discriminating if you don't want to be taken advantage of financially. Protect your own interests. Don't lend money or possessions.

**Birthday Baby:** You may have a conservative outlook, but will always put yourself on the line or challenge yourself at a feat that others would run from.

**BEN**



BY DANIEL SHELTON

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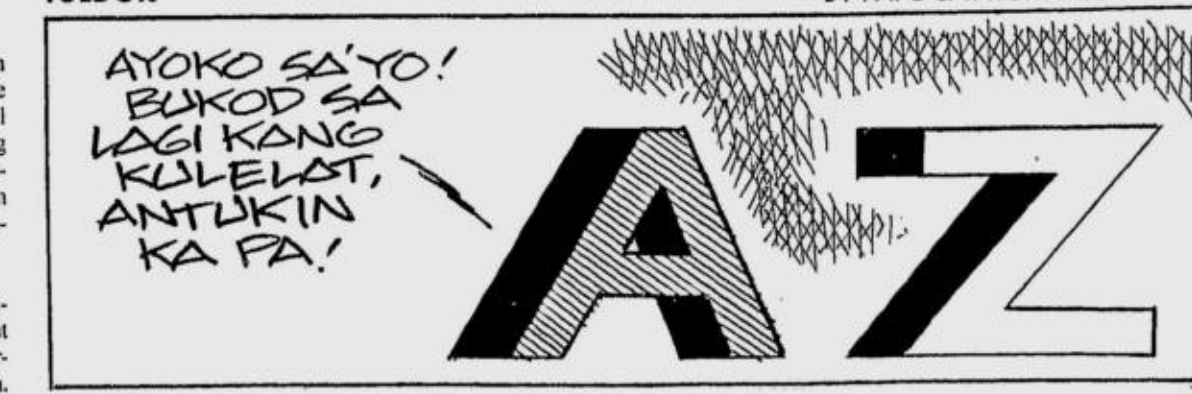
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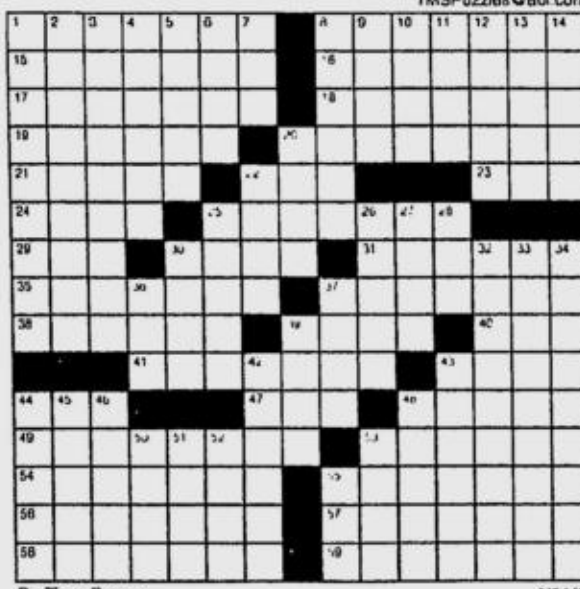


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- ACROSS**
- South African spear: var.
  - Deep bows
  - 1969 Beatles hit
  - Floozy
  - Show biz hanger-on
  - Finery
  - Employed again
  - Bring up the same old arguments
  - Chips in chips
  - Theater signal
  - Absolutely!
  - Moving vehicles
  - Perry or Broderick
  - Fruity concoction
  - Catches forty winks
  - Heads off
  - Having a will
  - Level expanse
  - Bogus
  - Earth's satellite
  - Meat cut
  - Toddler's injuries
  - Lounge around
  - Brief Madison Ave. products
  - Prune
  - Neutral shade
  - Product sticker
  - "The Merchant of Venice" lady
  - Turning muscle
  - Marine food fish
  - Pigged out
  - Intrinsic nature
  - Got cozy
  - French Cubist painter Braque



By Tom Pruett  
Chicago, IL

4/21/01

**PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER**



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- DOWN**
- Make worse
  - Singer of love songs
  - Bravery
  - Mistreats
  - Looks aghast
  - Word with rock or rain
  - Man with an alibi?
  - Thoroughfare
  - Length times width
  - Shipboard diaries
  - How sad!
  - Tin Pan
  - Watered silk
  - Gallies
  - Boring routines
  - Agulhas or Fear
  - Unleavened bread
  - Circles of saints
  - "Blackboard Jungle" writer Hunter
  - Dampen
  - Eur. defense assn.
  - Altering a course
  - Hind part
  - Finds a temporary tenant
  - Bar check
  - Inside info
  - Synthesizer maker
  - Sounded stridently
  - than life
  - Cook's coverage
  - Took over the wheel
  - Locations
  - Body trunk
  - Trolley
  - 51 & others: Lat.
  - Carry
  - Silence
  - Tent stake



# Gastronomic orgasms

(From page C4)

These were the two "avant-garde" restaurants that I visited while in Paris. Aside from the modernism of the cuisine, there was a stark simplicity to the interior design, the waiters were friendly without being gregarious, and I walked in with linen trousers, a sports coat and no tie. As someone who owns bowties, a vest, and bowler hat, I am obviously a person who believes in dressing for the occasion; but I don't believe that a restaurant meal should have the same sartorial requirements as a funeral. I liked the relaxed attitude, the friendly professionalism of the waiters and the touch that certain dishes came with a *mode d'emploi*. Imagine if you could have an art exhibition, a curator standing before the painting telling every single viewer: "Now, you must begin looking at the painting from the lower left-hand corner, noting the way the perspective curves into the distance..."

The meals don't come cheap (L'Arpege was 1200 F; Guy Savoy was 1500 F); and it isn't easy to book a table, either (the standard waiting time is around two months for a dinner reservation). But if you can imagine not just the scandal, but the excitement that ensued from the *Dejeuner sur l'herbe*, or the sense of change in the air when structuralism first entered the picture, then you might understand how I closed my eyes in rapture at each bit of Mr. Passard's quenelles

of pureed avocados with scented oil and caviar, or at Mr. Savoy's *croustillant* of pepper and almond bits. It was like being at the birthing of a new way of seeing, or a new sense of understanding, or a new idea of what food could taste. And, to be Barthesian about it, it was a text that gave pleasure: every single mouthful. Foreigners sometimes ask me: How can you write

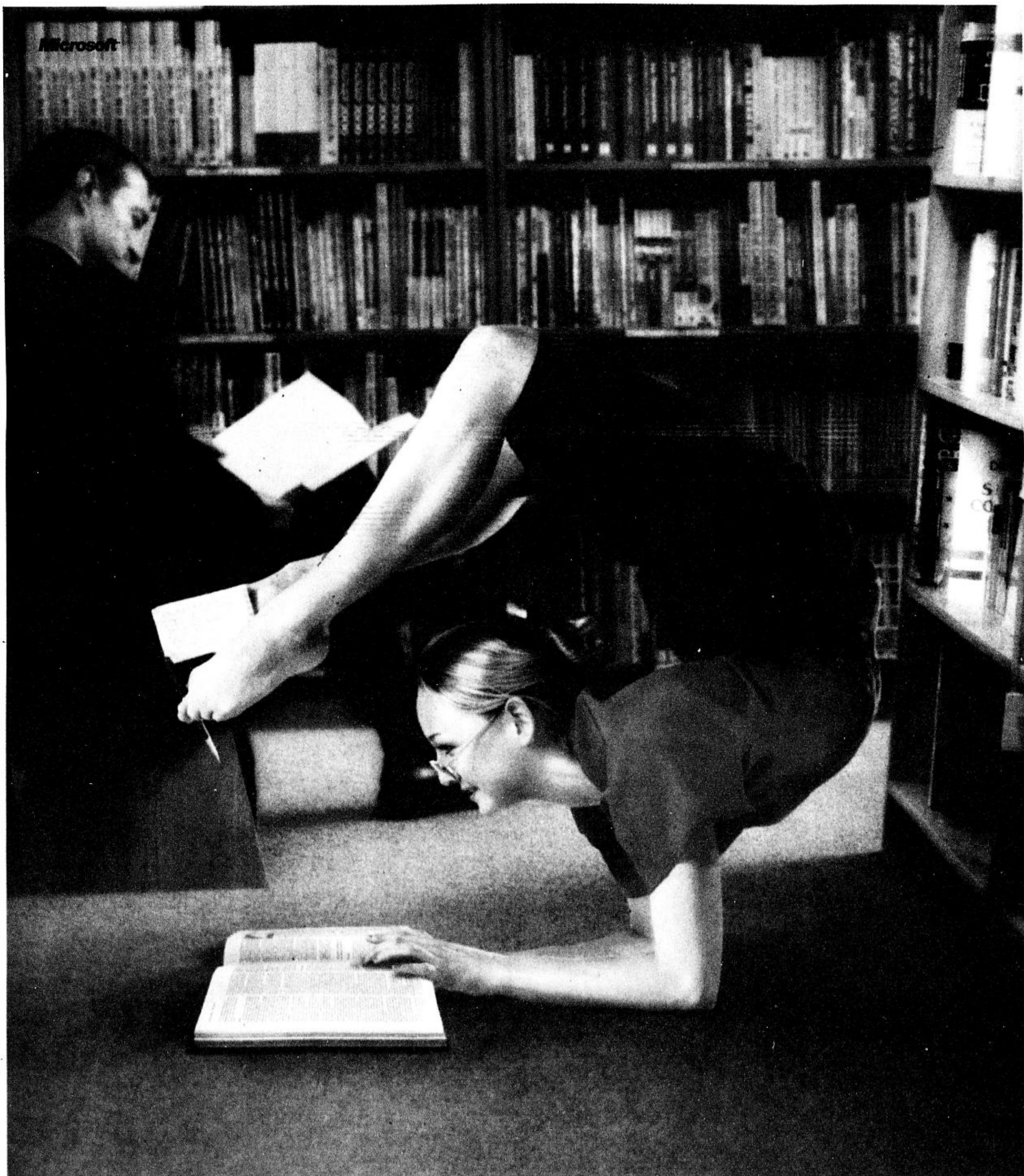
about food when you're from a country in which half the populace is starving? For them it is the equivalent of the Ayatolla writing on ecumenism, or one of those jokes like *Moses Goldstein's Book of Bacon Cookery*. I have been asked this by my own countrymen as well, and even by myself, in my more schizophrenic moments. Far too often, I have defended myself with the excuse that food is an art

form like any other, and must be treated and written about accordingly. But now I have Mr. de Quiros' far more elegant answer: "Some things are a matter of life and death and must not be foregone." Make that *La Boheme*, then, and a good bottle of young Bordeaux.

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# Manila old and new

**I** REMEMBER when Old Manila at The Pen opened. My husband Will and I and a gang of friends—the Concios, Tans, Tancos, Guerreros, etc.—made it our business to try out all the new hotel restaurants and events (e.g. New Year at The Pen, ending in a champagne breakfast). We liked Old Manila, with its gracious Philippine air and prints of Intramuros and the *arrabales* of Manila of the 19th century. And we liked the Charolais beef taken on a cart to tableside, cut as you indicated, then weighed and pierced with a little flag with your name on it, and the done-ness required. "Pink, not red," Cesar Concio always said.

Through many years and many chefs I revisited Old Manila. It helped that a childhood friend, Mila Magsaysay Valenzuela, was the hotel public relations chief.

In my most recent visit, decades later, it was being billed as The Pen's Old (New) Manila, and had been transformed into a more relaxed, Filipino *moderne* setting. "It is about the graphics and artwork on the walls—even on the menu. It is about the flowers on the table. Today's dining is about all-enveloping, all-surrounding 'experience.' It is the music. It is about the aromatherapy of mixing the scents of foods, flowers and spices with undertones of expensive perfumes and colognes. It is about how all these details, nuances, subtleties and not so subtle entertainment factors all come together to create a memorable setting for a memorable meal in Old Manila," explains The Pen's new food and beverage director,

## IN GOOD TASTE

Doreen G. Fernandez

Larry E. Cowle.

As of this writing, Old (New) Manila had two new stars: Impy Pilapil, whose artwork was on the walls, and a brand-new chef de cuisine, 28- almost-29-year-old Belgian-born Nicolas de Visch, soon to marry Filipina Maffie Donor, whom he met in Dubai. The artwork on the walls will change, perhaps to those of Dindo Llana; the chef will stay. He is partial to seafood, a *poissonier* or fish chef. Witness his Australian Murray cod with squid ink linguini and curry sauce; his grilled with Granny Smith apple and curry sauce, onion Bahji and coriander pasta.

## Interesting items

Other interesting items march through his menu: vegetarian dishes like eggplant and goat cheese risotto; blue goat's cheese and broccoli *conchiglie* pastas with rich tomato pulp and garlic *confit*. Soups like Andalusian *gazpacho* with zucchini flan, crab meat and bisque reduction; and Mulligatawny with herb-marinated chi. ken. Rack of lamb baked with chickpea and sage crust, *dauphinoise* potato

scented with fennel, yogurt and mint sauce; pan-fried veal tenderloin and orange-infused *polenta*, carrot and ginger sauce.

A constellation of desserts: soft Champagne ice on strawberry *jus* and cacao crisp; glazed apple and yogurt crepe with light maple syrup ice cream and sesame snap.

## Dish range

Also Les Classiques from the old Old Manila: smoked salmon or *tanguigue*; pan-fried foie gras with capers and garlic; pan-fried tenderloin with foie gras and truffle sauce; duck *confit* with fine beans and sautéed potatoes; grilled meats (certified US Angus beef and Australian Choice Lamb), fish and seafood, with a choice of sauces: herb butter, green peppercorn, *bearnaise*, mushroom or red wine sauce.

On the day we visited we tasted quite a range of dishes. For me, the violet artichoke and wild parsley soup with Iberico cheese; and garden greens with oven-baked goat cheese, roasted dried figs, pears and toasted almonds. For Juliet, classic French onion soup and the Chilean sea bass fillet with *confit*, grilled vegetables and *rocquette* pesto. For Garth (Mariano Garchitorena, PR manager, FB), Australian Murray cod with squid ink



CHEF Nicolas de Visch

linguini and curry sauce. For Chef Ed Quinson, hot and sour soup, the terrine of foie gras and caramelized apple with fig jelly and turnips, flavored with black currants.

Ed was there to supervise his children's cooking class who were learning etiquette and table manners while having dessert at the Old (New) Manila. "Dress right; sit upright; hold spoon and fork the correct way; identify the glasses; etc." Their desserts were chocolate cakes and cookies. Ours were from the menu, and scrumptious. I had the chilled mango soup with coconut jelly, topped

with lime chili (yes! doing a slow hot tango down the throat) ice cream—an exciting new thrill; Juliet had Rosewater Candied Fruits on Passion Fruit *sorbet* and Iced Bitter Chocolate; Garth the Raspberry *Crème Brûlée*; we all shared a small cheese platter with lovely Morbier, Soignon (goat cheese), Brie, Emmenthal and Mount Emu (with cumin seeds).

"If you want people to enjoy your food, you must enjoy it yourself," comments Chef Nicolas de Visch. "No matter what happens to you along the way, at the end of the day, it's all just food." And pleasure, also discovery, and the imprinting of memories.

# Gastronomic orgasms

## THE MAD TEA PARTY



Clinton Palanca

ONCE in a while you read an essay that is so heartfelt, so beautifully written and so complete, that it seems to put the final punctuation mark on a topic that you've been turning over in your mind. There is, for instance, Pico Iyer's essay on travelling, typically filled with the gravitas that this writer brings to traipsing around the world, managed to bring God, love, and existence into the equation; it was so encompassing that nowadays, when someone asks me why I like to travel so much, I simply e-mail them a copy of Mr. Iyer's essay. Another piece that seemed to put the full stop on my stuttering attempts to articulate my position as a man of letters living in this country at this time is Conrado de Quiros' speech before the French business association in Makati, the text of which can be found floating around the Internet.

Mr. De Quiros writes of many things: I will not even attempt to paraphrase him. I will, however, quote him verbatim, a certain passage which struck a chord, and an accord, in me. He writes: "I was vastly amused some months ago when I got an e-mail from someone who said he pictured me as some kind of Spanish-speaking hombre, or even caballero, as my name suggested, sipping wine and listening to opera, and generally living the quiet life of gentry... He got everything wrong, except for the sipping wine and listening to Puccini—some things in life are a matter of life and death and may not be foregone."

Art is always tinged with guilt in this country, and the more highbrow the art, the more it seems to require some sort of apology. It's easy to justify the social worth of those plays in Filipino performed by theater troupes from the University of the Philippines or Peta, where the actors are barefoot and scream, wear-

ing lurid expressions, at the audience, to the beat of ethnic gongs and drums; but what of, say, ballet or opera, verse that is not lyrical but ludic, prose that inspires not penitence but "mere" amusement? (They have compared Rizal with Dickens and Hugo; but where is our Wodehouse, our Coward?) We shelter, uncomfortably, under the rubric and epithet of "art"; we insist, with more than a little trace of defensiveness, that art is a matter spiritual and not material, and is outside the realm of economics and politics.

I've chosen to begin with such ponderous musings, because I have undergone the equivalent of rebaptism, or confirmation, in the field of art that I love most. Just as once in a while you read a book that suddenly reaffirms your belief in the power of literature as a whole, or listen to a piece of music that seems to hold in its melody the whole of your beliefs and emotions. I have returned from Paris having had not one, but three, gastronomic orgasms (in full view of the public), and my faith in the power of the palate strengthened with pentecostal vigour.

## Striking a sublime note

Haute cuisine is one of those arts which are, like haute couture or jewelry design, somewhat on the periphery of what might be called serious art; while a painting or a novel could be said to "say" something to the viewer or reader, fashion, design and food are merely pretty, or quaint, or delicious. Jose Ortega y Gasset wrote one of the seminal pieces on modern aesthetics, called "The Dehumanization of Art" ("dehumanization" is, for him, a good thing) in which things such as representation, emotion, etc., are gradually removed from art to leave it with a purer aestheticism; the elevation of a plate of food to the levels of "art" are merely those propositions taken to

their extreme.

In France, gastronomy is a serious business; when Alain Passard announced that his restaurant, L'Arpege, would no longer serve meat but only vegetables, it made the evening news. He is presently on the cover of the Gault-Millau magazine in France, looking pensively at a radish. For many, it was the equivalent of Picasso announcing that he would no longer do canvases, but sculptures exclusively. Everyone flocked to L'Arpege, wondering what the new, "vegetarian" Passard was up to. I managed to get a table there last month, and as a meat-eater, I am happy to report that he is a vegetarian only in the Filipino sense of the term ("Yes, I'm a vegetarian: I only eat fish and chicken.") Passard doesn't go as far as chicken, but he has generous quantities of langoustines, lobsters and caviar in his menu, so I'm quite sure that his sudden decision to embrace the vegetable kingdom did not spring from a moment of tenderness toward animal, or at least marine, life.

But how is the food at L'Arpege? For years he has been hailed as the next big thing; he is still restless, there is a post-modernist writhing in his experiments. Some of his dishes are exquisite; one, though, tasted like some of the fry-ups that I do in my kitchen when I am trying to clean out the fridge. His most famous dish is the tomato dessert, a candied tomato stuffed with a dozen flavors. (I was, annoyingly, seated beside an American lesbian couple who spent 20 minutes trying to identify each of the dozen flavors. Once in a while, it's a blessing when you don't understand the language being spoken around you.)

But make no mistake: Passard's cooking is as revolutionary as cubism was in its time; nothing you eat at L'Arpege is like anything you have eaten before. He also breaks with what Edward Behr claims is one of the foundational qualities of French cuisine, a refusal to mix sweet and savory; many of his dishes are quite sweet; in a fruity way, not the sweetness that comes from shallots or carrots. Yet another of the foundational qualities of French cuisine that he breaks with is the principle of infusion rather than accretion: he is almost Oriental in the way he layers flavors and textures, rather than perfuming stocks and sauces. It could be taken as a bow to globalization, or a throwback to medieval cookery, with its layering of spices.

## Five hours and counting

The next foray on my agenda was Guy Savoy's restaurant in the 17th arrondissement. I had studiously ignored him in the past simply because he seemed to be just another restaurant on the list, like the Carre des Feuilletants: Everything in place, everything quite good, but nothing outstanding. While Michel del Burgo's mediocre Taillevent has kept its place in the Michelin three-star firmament, Guy Savoy continues to languish in the two-star zone, which is like being on Cloud Eight, or in Sixth Heaven. It was here, though, that I had the most interesting meal of my trip.

He pulls out the stops at the amuse-bouche stage with one of his house specialties, raw foie gras which is "cooked" by the action of sea-salt, and an oyster that had been embedded in some sort of jellied mousse. The waiter gave me stern instruction on the order in which to eat them, and a "petit conseil" on how to appreciate the oyster: You must slide the spoon under the oyster, so that the mousse and the flesh enter your mouth at the same time.

Then there were langoustines with caviar, fish which had been fried with its scales against the pan, so that they were crisp and edible; lentils with truffle sauce; huge slabs of pan-fried foie gras with chanterelle mushrooms; artichoke soup which came with a brioche that the waiter lovingly slathered with truffled butter; then, as a rather anticlimactic main course, lacquered chicken breast. The occasion was saved by the arrival of more truffles, this time mixed in with mashed potatoes. At this point my eyes were beginning to glaze over. A tip: don't make the Guy Savoy a restaurant for your first date with someone that you aren't sure will be interesting. I checked my watch; four hours had elapsed since the beginning of the meal, and I was more than halfway through the book that I had started around the time that the bread arrived.

I hurried through the cheese course (I had a nice runny Epoisse, Livarot, and a bit of Munster); then the waiter came by with what he ominously referred to as "the first dessert": three huge glass bowls of fraises des bois, tiny wild strawberries, and one of my favorite fruits in the world. Each of them, he explained, was at a different temperature, and had been perfumed with a different flower; I had to progress from left to right, from the subtlest perfume to the strongest, from the slightly warm to the one that was practically a sorbet. It was marvelous. The second dessert, a forgettable chocolate confection, was just small enough to fit into my stomach at this point. I had long since finished the novel, and was now idly leafing through magazines, mainly for those racy French ads that use nubile naked women to advertise everything from mattresses to thigh tightening cream. By the time I had finished with the friandises and the chocolates, it had been more than five hours since I first entered the restaurant. Eating at Guy Savoy's is as much an endurance test as it is a meal; but, like all marathons, you feel great having completed it.

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